

(Photo left: Sixth-grade girls get in the spirit on PJ and Movie Day.)



(Photo Right: Seventh-grade boys in their Santa hats to get in the holiday spirit. Photo Credit: Brianna-Love Lucas)

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School News

Robotics Competition at Worcester Poly Tech

By ~ Brianna-Love Lucas

Students in the CMS Robotics Club attended the FIRST LEGO League Robotics Competition on Saturday, December 7 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Three teams from CMS attended. The team names were Argon, Don't Eat Bagels and The Holy Molys. The students had to build and program robots that could complete several design challenges such as lifting up a Lego road and pushing a group of building blocks into a circle.

Charlie Whinney, CMS 7th Grader and member of the Holy Molys team, said, "Robotics is fun because you get to learn about teamwork and learn how to code."

Mr. Erlandsen, a faculty advisor for Robotics said, "We came close to qualifying for States, but just

missed. The teams had very good robotic performance and most missions were run successfully. They developed programming skills for robots, engineering skills for mission solving and project skills after researching solutions to improve city life."



According to the Massachusetts FIRST Lego League, the global robotics program "...gives students ages 9 to 14 the opportunity to research and solve a real-world problem, present their work and potential solutions to their peers, and learn from team coaches and

mentors...Students think like scientists and engineers as they experiment and overcome obstacles, all while building their self-esteem and confidence."

The Lego Robotics Program will start up again as an intramural in January.

The Sign of the Times

By ~ Reeve Day

There has been a sign that the Cohasset Middle School is finally becoming its own school, a wooden sign. While students and staff were on Thanksgiving break, a wooden sign was placed outside the school near the bike racks.

The sign gave Cohasset Middle School its own identity. Students and faculty feel that this makes a huge difference in a small way. It represents becoming our own school, not some part of Cohasset High School. The Middle School has always shared the same lunchroom and gym, so it always felt like part of the high school. With a new sign and a new entrance, the school department is really taking a stand and beginning the process of



separating the middle and high schools, and allowing the middle school to become an independent school.

An Hour of Code

By ~ Ollie Buckley

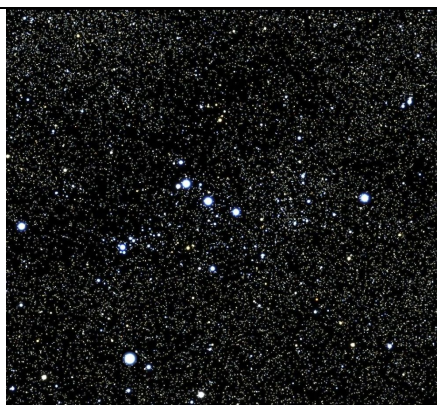


The week of December 9th is National Computer Code week. Coding is writing computer programs using programming languages. An Hour of Code was offered to CMS students on Thursday, December 12. Students demonstrated the LEGO robots created by the Robotics Team. Middle schoolers were able to attend who were not on the

Robotics Team. The students watched a video on how computer programming impacts everyday life.

The Robotics Team explained how they used coding to program their robots. The Robotics Teams had funny names like Holy Moly or Don't Eat Bagels. The leader of Don't Eat Bagels, Nolan Smith, informed me that they have worked on these robots since the beginning of the year.

The most notable thing about the middle schoolers is they are very hard-working and ready to learn. And the result of their hard work was very impressive to say the least. *(Photo Caption: Alex Ravanesi, Finn Yemini, Evan Welch, Tommy Basile, Mr. Mills, Mrs. Ceruti, Paul Chapman and Nolan Flaherty check out the Robotics Team game board.)*



Seventh Graders See the Stars

By ~ Royce Bleakie

In November, the 7th grade visited the Blake Planetarium at Plymouth Community Intermediate School to deepen their understanding of astronomy. During the field trip, the 7th grade learned about the parts of the universe and the sky above them. While the students looked up at the universe on the ceiling, a teacher explained the constellations, zodiac signs and the size of the universe. Students watched a video narrated by Tom Hanks that explained the size of the Earth compared to other planets and the possibility of other planets supporting life. The

7th grade learned a lot and was very grateful for the grant from the PSO for making this field trip possible.

This field trip also connected to the book we are reading, *Hidden Figures*, which centers around the four main characters, Katherine Goble(Johnson), Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, and Christine Darden, who were mathematicians involved in space flight.

At this moment the 7th grade is researching other hidden figures in society, such as Maurice Hilleman, Susie Taylor, and Anne Mergen.

Students Uncover Hidden Figures

By ~ Brenna Kane

For the past three months, the 7th grade had been working on a project involving the book and movie *Hidden Figures*. This story is about three African American women who worked at NACA (National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics which later became NASA) at a time of extreme discrimination. Students have been learning about bias against females and African Americans and the scientific events that took place at NACA at the time.

This study led students to other activities involving Hidden Figures. For example, in November 7th grade took a field to the planetarium and also got to see the movie *Hidden Figures*. This supplied students a better understanding of the book and what scientific goals they were trying to achieve. The main projects students were creating was finding their own hidden figure, or person in society who has done something important but gone unnoticed and create a way to honor them. This allowed students to be creative and think deeply on how they want this person to be recognized. The 7th grade worked very hard on this project and got the experience to show them to their community.

(*Photo below: Sarah Scott, Christian Bunge and Reggie Lanier show off their research on Garrett Morgan who invented the traffic light and gas mask. Photo below right: Mrs. St. Peter learns about the research Owen Connell and Shane Mulcahy did on a hidden figure.*)



Student Council Update

By Leilia Omran, Vice President, Student Council

The Student Council is welcoming winter with open arms! To start off, we would like to thank Mr. Mills for listening to our ideas regarding the new rotating lunch schedule. We are extremely grateful that he was able to make our voices heard and help us make a difference.

The Student Council began the month of December by inviting students to create knotted blankets to donate to Cradles to Crayons, a non-profit organization in Boston. After many days of after-school blanket making, the Student Council is proud to confirm the completion of 10 blankets created by 26 student volunteers. We continue to support Project 351 and their Cradles to Crayons initiative.

On December 20th, the Student Council continued the annual tradition of encouraging students to wear their pajamas while watching a movie in the auditorium before heading off to winter break.

We would like to thank the student body for the kind messages written to Dana Farber patients on Pink Day back in October! We were recently informed that the patients loved the caring words, and were very appreciative that the students took the time to make them feel supported. The Student Council wishes safe travels and happy holidays to students and faculty during the break. We hope you'll enjoy and look forward to future spirit days and a spirit week in the upcoming months! *(Photo Caption: The knotted blankets made by CMS students are piled at the middle school entryway, alongside the Cradles to Crayons collection box and a poster for PJ and Movie Day.)*



Student Voice Prioritized by New Superintendent

By ~ Noah McDowall

The School Superintendent Advisory Committee, an initiative drafted by our new Superintendent Patrick E. Sullivan and Assistant Superintendent, Leslie Scollins, is a committee composed of a diverse range of hand-picked students. This committee was organized and formulated to increase the degree of student input in up and coming initiatives, regulations, and activities. This committee was originally planned to convene six times in its entirety, but now there could plausibly be amendments to the frequency and amount of times this committee assembles.

Initiatives that this council is contemplating are student's voice and how to incorporate it to a greater degree with regards to future decisions, establishing intuitive and noteworthy methods of communication between the administration and student body, granting the student body more liberties and freedoms, and a vast quantity of other issues.

"I am confident in our abilities as a committee," remarked Charlie Lankow, one of three middle school delegates on the SSAC.

The SSAC is constituted predominantly of high schoolers, with three middle school representatives from eighth grade. Their names are Charlie Lankow, Noah C. McDowall, and Hailey Santos. All are passionate and ready to utilize their newfound influence for the betterment of the school.

This committee could be a solution long standing issue of incorporating student views in a meaningful way. Based upon each member being hand-selected, we can already infer that they're competent individuals, but with direct ability to advise the superintendent and other administrators on the impactful change that can be devised.

Although there is a diverse range of students, with a vast range of different backgrounds and stances on issues, all are collaborating to better the school, increase student voices, the better the communication between the administration and the student body. The best of luck to all those serving on this unprecedented committee.

The Arts at CMHS

Alice in Wonderland

By ~ Brianna Love-Lucas



On November 15-16 at the school auditorium, audiences enjoyed the Middle School production of *Alice in Wonderland*. The cast was made up of 22 middle schoolers who sang several numbers and danced in the musical. The costumes were amazing and made by Cohasset parent Ashley Caulfield.

The story of *Alice In Wonderland* is there is a little girl named Alice who finds her way to a dreamland called Wonderland where there are no rules and no more troubles until she meets The Queen of Hearts. Alice was played by three different actors to capture the way she changed size. Caroline Struzziero, Lylah Jackson and Maddy Clarke shared the role of Alice. The Queen of Hearts was played by Leah Squatrito. The Chesire Cats were played by Hayden Johnston, Avery Galvin, and Amelia Palmer. The Caterpillar was played by Leila Omran. Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum were played by Samatha and Isabella Kearney. The King of Hearts was played by Jack Kearney and the Mad Hatter was played by Noah Simone. Johnny Appleton played the March Hare.

The cast performed in school one time and two times on the weekend. It was a whole middle school performance on Monday, November 19.

Holiday Concert Gets Audience in the Spirit

By ~ Ollie Buckley

On Thursday, December 5th, the auditorium was filled with the beautiful music and uplifting voices of members of the CMS Band and Chorus at the Holiday Concert.

The highlights of the band concert were jazz band's "Viva la Vida," 6th and 7th grades' "Three Mini Nutcrackers" and 8th grade's "Uptown Funk". The chorus's favorite song was "Believe." It was sung by the whole middle school. Unlike other years, sixth graders played pieces by themselves *and* with 7th grade. The 7th grade played with 8th grade. The 7th grade was the only grade that didn't get a solo.

Mr. Bleier and Mrs. Hegland said that they learned a lot about how to manage and move many students on and off stage. Every student in the middle school takes band and chorus. The middle school chorus teacher, Mrs. Hegland, is excited and thinks it is really cool opportunity that students can take chorus the whole year, instead of one trimester. Students have an opportunity to be in a big class instead of one with 12 kids.

The band and chorus are looking for more difficult pieces for the March concert. The chorus is planning something big for the upcoming March concert.

After every concert, the art created by the students from that trimester is displayed in the CMS Learning Commons. Make sure to stop by after upcoming concerts to see the masterpieces. Stay tuned to the Pond Street Press for more articles on the Cohasset Middle School Arts.

Editorials

New Start Time in 2020-21 School Year

By ~ Maxwell Fernald

In August, the Cohasset School Committee decided to accept the recommendations of the Start Schools Later Team of parents who have been lobbying for later school start times at the middle school and high school. Parents supplied research to show that the current start time, 7:30 AM, is too early for teenagers. Most students have to get up at 6:00 AM to prepare for school, eat breakfast, and catch the bus. So after many committee meetings, the rule was finally decided. The start time would be moved back to 8:30 AM, and the Deer Hill School is to start in its place.

One issue with the different start times is that if we want to start an hour earlier than we have to end an hour later. This means that we have an hour of less time to do what we want in the afternoon. The afternoon is the most productive time, which could come with pros and cons. For the cons we would have less after school time to do personal activities, such as sports. But the pros are that students would be more productive in the afternoon. That could also backfire, as kids are already very anxious to get out of school at 2:10.

One of the greatest concerns with a later dismissal is the sports teams would have to push back practices and games. The sports activities could potentially have to be cut short when it gets dark. This is especially a problem in late fall, winter, and early spring, which is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the school sports year.

The only way that CMS and CHS will be able to start later is if Deer Hill starts earlier. This is due to the buses which are shared by all three schools. The School Committee decided that the Deer Hill School would swap times with CMS and CHS. Some of the parents of the Deer Hill children have said that they didn't want this change. They explained that it would be difficult to wake up the younger children (who could not be left home alone) to drop their 3rd - 5th graders off. Also, the start time has the middle/high school in the middle of the two other schools. This would force parents with younger children at different schools to have to wait at their homes for over an hour between drop-offs in the morning and afternoon. This would be very inefficient, especially for working parents. The children would have to be signed up for after school activities or have babysitters. This could be expensive.

There is a reason for the start time to switch, and there is science behind it. The older a person gets, the less sleep they need. An Infant needs 12-15 hours of sleep, while an adult only needs 7-8 hours of sleep. A 6-13 year old (The main age of the school) needs 9-11 hours of sleep and teens need 8-10 hours of sleep. I know that the majority of the students at the Cohasset Middle School do not get this much sleep. And when you don't sleep enough, side effects can include forgetfulness, difficulty to learn new topics and inability to concentrate. These are not ideal effects to have at school. There are other effects when you don't get enough sleep, such as a higher blood pressure, an increased risk of a heart attack and an increased risk of a stroke. It can even make you more depressed or obese.

John Gillis, a 7th grader, says he does want the start time change. He explained, "The current start time does not allow children to wake up and go to school feeling refreshed and at their full mental capacity."

Potential Solutions: There are a couple options that could be a compromise. One way that there could be a compromise is if CMS and CHS were to move Utility Block to the morning, and then only delay the start by 30 minutes instead of an hour. The 30 minutes of Utility Block would let students wake up, and attendance can start at the 1st period, therefore if someone wants to sleep in, they can be driven to school 30 minutes later. Another option is that Utility Block could be moved to the end of the day. This would allow the sports teams to leave early, so they do not miss any game time.

I believe that both points are valid. As some of my friends lean towards not wanting the start times changed, I still remain neutral. There are good reasons on both sides, and I think that there is no definite answer about which start time is correct. This is why this issue is still being debated by the School Committee...

Sports

After School Sports at CMS Proposed for the Future

By ~ Nolan Seebeck

Here in Cohasset sports are a big deal. It's the most common past time for students at CMS. It's a time for kids to get together, have fun and learn lessons that are valued for the rest of their lives, which makes you wonder why don't we have more. For after school activities and sports, we seem to be lacking heavily. Sure most of us do travel basketball, soccer, football but what about the more discrete activities like cross country? Schools like Hingham and Marshfield offer a wide range of after school activities.

“We have a bunch,” explained 7th-grade student Will Litchfield from Whitman Middle School. “Cross country, track, basketball, baseball [both intermediate], All You Can Eat Club, Drawing Club, Drama Club.”

After hearing this from my good friend, I decided to dive deeper. All over Massachusetts schools are offering clubs students here at CMS couldn't even imagine like Hacky Sack club.

This doesn't mean it's all hopeless. With the new administration, things are really looking up. When Mr. Mills came to his new job here at Cohasset, he noticed that we didn't have a cross country team, so he posted a survey. After a great response, he decided to put in a request for a cross country team for all students at CMS. Mr.Mills is very excited to see the atmosphere change in the school. Students will be able to represent the Cohasset Middle School with pride and compete with other schools. Sports like these are easy for students to pick up and create a family between teammates that could open up for new friendships. Mr.Mills also noted that there isn't really much equipment needed. If you're big into sports something like the cross country team is great for conditioning and preparing for your next season. All and all, there's nothing not to like about this new proposal.

As for other after school activities, the CMS staff is keeping an open mind. Principal Mills explained that before starting a club he wants to see student interest so that the school uses its time, money and effort in the right places. Really it's up to us, the student body, and what we want to see. If you're into something, ask around and maybe your idea could become the next after school activity. So keep an open mind and get involved.

The Pond Street Press Staff

Faculty Advisor: Mrs. Melia

Senior Editors:

Oliver Buckley, William Elwell, Brenna Kane, Reggie Lanier

Editorial Page Editors:

Max Fernald, Noah McDowall

Staff Reporters - Royce Bleakie, Oliver Buckley, Reeve Day, Max Fernald, Brenna Kane, Reggie Lanier, Brianna Love Lucas, Noah McDowall, Nolan Seebeck

Photographers - William Elwell, Sarah Loughlin, Brianna Love-Lucas