
SPRING 2024

THE TORNADO CONNECTION

KEEPING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN

Current Sixth Graders Offer Advice to New Students

BY RYLEE YOST, CHIEF EDITOR

Many agree that transitioning from fifth to sixth grade can seem overwhelming, but current sixth grade students and teachers have reassuring advice for the newly arriving IHS students.

Current sixth grader Luke Szul was most concerned about the size of the building. His best advice: "Walk through your schedule on the summer orientation day." On the first day of school, it was simple for him to find his classes because he already knew where everything was. His hardest class that he had was his family consumer class. To make that class a little easier, he had his grandmother help with some of the at-home baking.

Lunch was also a concern. As it turns out though, he likes how he is in the same cafeteria with his class, but he wishes that students could choose which cafeteria they eat in. If Luke could alter the schedule in any way, he would make the 30-minute lunch period a little longer.

At the end of the day in Luke's elementary school, the buses would be called by number, but he enjoys the way the buses are set up here where students are dismissed by waves. "You know where your bus will be and when it will be here," he said. He added that having the high school students on the bus was an adjustment, but he got used to it after a while.

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Students in Mrs. Meskel's 6th grade ELA class traveled to Pittsburgh to present their award-winning essay.

His favorite part about sixth grade is having all of the elementary schools come together into this building. He is nervous about taking the gifted level classes next year in seventh grade, but he is excited for the challenge.

Another sixth grader, Camryn Rivers, feels that the biggest change moving from fifth to sixth grade for her are the teachers being just a little more strict than the ones in fifth grade. For her, computer class was kind of hard, but she handled this class by just getting on top of the work being posted.

When it comes to the lunch schedules, she doesn't mind how they are randomly selected and that the sixth graders eat last at noon. She says that there are lots of opportunities to make new friends, so even if you aren't put in the same cafeteria as your friends, you can still have fun. In her eyes, the most stressful part about the school is walking in the halls with so many students. She added that most of the time, sixth grade is in the sixth grade wing, so the students in the hallway are primarily from the same grade.

Her favorite parts about sixth grade are all of her teachers and being able to see all of her friends everyday. She doesn't have much contact with seventh and eighth graders, but she feels like having them in the building is nice. Camryn's tips for future sixth graders: "Stay on top of your work, and take bonus opportunities whenever you can."

Ryan Fike agrees that the biggest difference is the size of the building and the number of students in it. When trying to find his classes on the first day of school, he felt nervous that he wouldn't be able to find them. He was quickly put at ease when all of the teachers were so helpful. According to Ryan, the most stressful part of his day is worrying about being late to any of his classes.

If Ryan was given the opportunity to alter the schedule in any way, he would not change it at all. He likes the schedule the way it is. His favorite part about being in sixth grade are the different classes he is in, and he likes being in the same school as the seventh and eighth grade. His tip for future sixth graders: "Always arrive at school and your classes on time."

It wasn't too long ago that the sixth grade staff had to adapt to the new building too. They remember what it was like, and they go above and beyond to make everyone feel at ease. Mrs. Cirelli is excited to meet the new sixth graders next year and see all of their smiling faces. "I hope everyone is kind to others and ready to work hard and learn," she said. For the sixth graders coming up to the Intermediate, she recommends having a positive attitude all the time, and also to not stop in the middle of the hallway when walking to class.

Mr. Hilderbrand looks at the transition to the IHS as a positive opportunity. "You have a fresh start to make a great first impression," he said. He is expecting the students to come into the school with a positive attitude and uplift others around them. He recommends that the sixth graders focus on what they can control and not what they can't. "There are always going to be daily challenges at school, but I do my best to not focus on the stressful portions of the day," he said.

Mrs. Jones is excited to see new faces in her class next year and to see if she had any of the siblings of the new students before. She recommends that the sixth graders are prepared to do their work and ask for help so they don't get behind. Next year, she expects that the students come prepared and are ready to learn. Mrs. Jones favorite part of the day is interacting with her co-workers and students. "They are all such fun to be around," she said.



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Algebra Camp Returns This August!

BY CHLOE WATSON AND ASHLYN REINSEL, EDITOR

Algebra Camp will again be offered this summer to students entering grades 7-9 who will be taking Algebra I in the fall. The camp will take place in the IHS makerspace classroom from August 12-16.

Algebra Camp is an opportunity for the incoming algebra students to work with the concepts for the first semester of Algebra 1 in a fun, activity-based learning environment. Some of the activities that the students participate in include: a gummy bear launch, making popcorn graphs, a submarine launch, and creating human graphs using a motion detector.

Mrs. Bodamer, the teacher who hosts the camp each year, sees many changes in the students between the beginning and the end of the camp. "The students leave with more confidence, precision, and excitement for getting problems right," she said.



She believes Algebra Camp gives students a chance to experience the pacing for Algebra 1. According to Mrs. Bodamer, "Although many students are good at math, they have never had to think algebraically. Algebra Camp gives those students an opportunity to see what it is like when all of the other students in the room are trying to figure out the problem at the same time." In the end, students will be able to solve equations and understand slope/slope intercept form.

Mrs. Bodamer has been spending a week in the summer teaching Algebra Camp since 2000. Prior to that, the camp was hosted by Mr. Krack, who now teaches at the high school. She was selected to continue the camp because she had the availability to teach it during the summer. "I'm so happy that I took over [Algebra Camp] because it is one of my favorite environments to teach in. I love seeing students have fun while learning math without the pressures of testing," she said.

Next school year, Mrs. Bodamer will be moving to the high school to teach a new course called Consumer Math, along with ninth grade Algebra I. Mrs. Bodamer felt that she had the unique perspective needed to instruct the course. Even though she will be teaching at the high school, she will continue to host Algebra Camp as long as she is invited back to do it.

After 25 years of teaching seventh grade, Mrs. Bodamer wanted to say something about her time at the Intermediate High School. She said, "I am very excited for the way that I have been able to help students learn how to think and to problem solve. I have been lucky enough to have a great group of adults to work with as I did that. I am sad to leave the adults, but I think I can help the students at the high school."

Finley McChesney and Logan Thomas participated in Algebra Camp during the summer of 2023. They both would recommend that future students register for Algebra Camp because it helped them in Algebra class, they made new friends, and it was a great, educational experience. Both stated that their favorite part of camp was hanging out with their friends that also participated. Algebra Camp helped Finley through Algebra class because he was already familiar with some of the concepts. On the other hand, Algebra Camp helped Logan with linear equations.

If the morning session of Algebra Camp from 8-11:30 a.m. fills up, a second session will be offered the same week in the afternoons from 12:30-4 p.m. It costs \$50 per student, and all supplies will be provided. To sign up for Algebra Camp, place the registration form and a check in an envelope and return it to the IHS office, Mrs. Bodamer's classroom (204), or mail it to the school. The deadline to sign up is June 30, 2024. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Bodamer at amy.bodamer@basdk12.org or 724-214-3151 ext. 5510. Please use email during the summer months.

Rock Orchestra Recognized at PMEA Conference

BY NATALIE RIVERS, CHIEF EDITOR

The Rock Orchestra, which involves students in grades eight-12, has been offering a fresh brand of orchestra music to audiences since 2016. The audition-based group directed by Mrs. Katie Black meets every Wednesday from 3:05 - 4:15.

On April 18, the Butler Rock Orchestra attended the PMEA State Conference in Erie and were selected as one of the top performing groups in Pennsylvania. They performed *Sweet Child O' Mine*, *Walk This Way*, *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, *The Best of Electric Light Orchestra*, *Kashmir*, and a Lady Gaga Hit Mix.

According to Mrs. Black, when the group started there were around 20 students and now it has grown to 42 students. Rock Orchestra is made up of many different instruments including violin, viola, cello, electric bass, electric guitar, keyboard, and drums. "The original members wanted to perform in a 'rock' setting, so I surveyed my students for interest, and then later the group was created," she said.

Students that want to audition are given two weeks to prepare. Mrs. Black said, "Rock Orchestra only practices once a week, so students need to pick up difficult music fast." During the audition, students are expected to perform the piece from start to finish. She added, "Students should be able to play their part confidently because you can't be quiet in a rock setting."



Emma Lauer and Alyse Wells are eighth grade violin players in the Rock Orchestra. Emma said that she enjoys playing harder music and having more of a variety of songs. Alyse agreed and added, "The whole experience has been amazing." Emma and Alyse explained that they both prepared for their auditions by going home with the music and practicing as much as they could. Alyse encouraged other students to audition. She said, "If you want to do it, you should do it because you can try again." Emma added, "Prepare yourself and never doubt yourself."

Emma wanted to audition when the Rock Orchestra came to her elementary school, and in seventh grade she really realized it was something she wanted to do. Alyse says that when the Rock Orchestra came to her elementary school she was inspired to join. Their favorite part of Rock is the music and the people who are in the orchestra that create a positive space.

Riley Rittersdorf is an eighth grade cello player. "It is so exciting to be in the Rock Orchestra and so much fun," she said. She prepared by practicing a lot before the audition, but she was still nervous. Now that she is in the orchestra, she practices as much as she can during the week and focuses on the things that she struggles with. "I have always loved music, and I also like the people that are involved," she said.

Michael Dedionisio, an eighth grade piano/keyboard player, said that he loves being in Rock Orchestra and that it is one of his favorite things. He believes that students who want to try out have to practice a lot if they want to be confident during their audition. He realized he wanted to try out when he heard about it and his friends inspired him to do it. His favorite aspects are the people and the trips.

Vossler and Brendlinger Retire This June

BY MOLLY RUDISH

Two of the IHS beloved teacher aides, Janet Vossler and Amanda Brendlinger, will be retiring at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.



Mrs. Janet Vossler has been assisting with seventh and eighth grade learning support at the IHS for 13 years. In addition, Mrs. Vossler has also been a manager of fabric stores, a worker at a daycare, and an emotional support helper. She had decided to become a teacher's aide to help students achieve their goals in learning. Mrs. Vossler is very excited for her retirement and is looking forward to camping, quilting, and spending time with her grandchildren. To celebrate her retirement, Mrs. Vossler and her husband will be taking a trip to Hawaii.

Mrs. Vossler's coworkers will miss her greatly. According to co-worker and teacher Mrs. Mary Beth Brink, "Mrs. Vossler is a kind and gentle spirit who always brings out the best in the students." Mrs. Vossler hopes students will remember her as someone who helped them have success in school and fulfill their goals.

As for Mrs. Amanda Brendlinger, she has been teaching an assortment of students and subjects around the IHS for five years and has spent lots of time working as a mental health professional in the Butler community as well. Mrs. Brendlinger became a teacher's aide to help all different students and help them succeed. She is excited yet nervous for her retirement as she'll miss the incredible students and teachers she works with but is prepared for the next chapter of her life. With her retirement approaching, Mrs. Brendlinger plans to travel all across the United States and North America in her camper with her husband, just before moving to Ecuador in South America. She will also spend a lot of time crocheting and creating homemade soaps.

Mrs. Brendlinger will be focused on helping her students remember her as a fun teacher who always tried to help them learn. Mrs. Brendlinger's co-workers will also remember her kindly, as security guard Mr. John Stepansky commented, "She does a great job and will be missed."

Congratulations to Mrs. Vossler and Mrs. Brendlinger, and we hope you enjoy many years of happy retirement!



Starfish Continues to Promote Kindness

BY CALEB MCCALL

The Starfish program has been promoting kindness and inclusivity in school since 2001. Over the years, the program has changed somewhat, but the message remains: Everyone belongs at the IHS!

Starfish started when Mr. James Allen, a principal at the Junior High School, heard about an anti-bullying program at Karns City that the students really enjoyed. That program happened to be developed by a friend and former colleague, Mr. Denny Barger. In an effort to reduce bullying at what was then Butler Junior High School, Mr. Allen asked Mr. Barger to train the teachers in his Starfish philosophy. The whole concept is based on the starfish story, about a boy who persistently saves as many starfish as he can that have been washed up along a beach. When questioned, the boy explains that he can't save every starfish, but he can make a difference to as many as possible. Once the teachers were trained and the students became involved, the bullying drastically decreased within the building. To this day, administration and teachers credit this transition with the warm, welcoming atmosphere of the school.

Some of the teachers have been involved in the program since it started, and they continue to be passionate about the message that Starfish teaches. These teachers include: Mrs. Neely Aldridge, Mrs. Chwalik, Mrs. Minch, and Mrs. Snyder. “It is so important to all of us that students want to come to school, that they feel welcome and supported here. Starfish has allowed us to get students involved in spreading that philosophy. Our leaders each year are what make this school a wonderful place. Starfish wouldn’t work without them,” Mrs. Minch commented.

To become a Starfish leader in eighth grade, students have to be nominated by teachers or principals. Candidates do not necessarily have to have good grades, but they need to show positive leadership in the classroom towards their peers, by being kind and respectful to others. Those who choose to become involved as Starfish leaders attend a training in August, where they learn more about the history of the program, the responsibilities that come with being a Starfish leader, and how to run team building activities with the sixth graders at the beginning of the year. This summer’s training will be on August 14 from 9 am-3pm at the IHS.

Once the school year starts, these newly trained leaders are called upon to help with many activities. On average, the Starfish leaders are invited to help with 25-30 activities, including food drives, open house, orientation, the Student of the Month program, peer mediation, and other service projects. If the leaders participate in at least five activities, they attend a field trip in May. This year’s trip is to Camp Guyasuta, an outdoor ropes course with physical activities like zip lines, climbing ropes, and harness activities. Beyond the reward day, being a leader is great for the students involved because it gives them a community to rely on. Mrs. Snyder commented, “I love Starfish because the students get to know each other throughout the year and make new friends who are not in their same classes.”

Over time, certain aspects of Starfish have changed, but others have stayed the same. A few of the things that have changed are who is involved in the program. “When our building had ninth graders in it, the leaders were still trained in eighth grade but could continue to be involved in ninth grade,” Mrs. Snyder said. Another change she mentioned was cyber bullying. “Cyber bullying didn’t really exist when we started, and now it is a hard type of bullying to attack,” she said. A few things that have stayed the same are the goal that they are working towards. Mrs Snyder said, “The students are still trying to be Starfishy.”

Some of the newer staff members are also very involved with Starfish. Mrs Neigh believes that the program makes a huge difference in the school. “Our school environment can always use more kindness,” she said. Ms. Carlson was a starfish leader when she was in school. When she started teaching here, she knew she wanted to be involved with the program that had helped her make so many friends in school. “There is a lot of bullying and kids being left out in schools across the country, so we want to make school a more enjoyable place,” she said.

Enrichment Program Expands Offerings

BY RILEY CLARK AND SAMMIE JO KING, EDITOR

Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of enrichment classes through the Enrichment Studies Program, known as ESP. Some of the classes students can choose from include: Intro to Adulting, TV/Video Production, Interior Design, and Makerspace.

The ESP coordinators, Dr. Elizabeth DeThomas and Mrs. Veronica Sankey, described ESP as an opportunity for high achieving students to learn about the topics that they choose. Students receive the invitation to join ESP based on their GPA from the first half of the school year. Dr. DeThomas gave her insight on what it is like to be an organizer: “It’s fun to hear what everyone likes, but also stressful because you can’t give everyone their top choice.”



Mrs. Courtney Behrens is the teacher for Intro to Adulthood, a new class for students in the third trimester. She said, "Intro to Adulthood is designed to be just that: It introduces students to important concepts they will need to understand in adulthood." Some of the activities in the class include resumes, taxes, job applications, and house buying. To prepare to teach this new course, Mrs. Behrens researched projects and activities and then modified them so that they made sense for 13-14 year olds.

A student from Intro to Adulthood, Olivia Pepper, said, "I'm really happy with the class. Mrs. Behrens has taught me how to manage my time and school work." Olivia's advice to future seventh graders going into ESP is: "Try to pick something you would like; it doesn't matter if your friends are in it."

Mr. Breit Cochran teaches TV/Video Production, an ESP course that teaches students to plan ahead and utilize time management skills. His expectations for his students are to "be able to be self motivated, go past their limits, and to try new things." The students work with cameras, animation software, computers, and microphones. Each trimester, Mr. Cochran teaches his students how to use the equipment and cultivates their collaboration skills. His advice to the upcoming seventh grade students is: "Go into it knowing it's an enrichment course. You have to want to do it."

Claire Landon enjoyed her time in TV/Video. "It taught me different editing techniques and how to create a coherent and effective video," she said. Her advice for future ESP students: "Pay attention to instructions, and you will have fun!"

Mrs. Lindsey Walker teaches Interior Design, a course where students research and design different aspects of a digital house. Mrs. Walker prepares for her class by organizing the craft corner and purchasing supplies. She said that her ESP class can help students grow academically by "opening a door to a potential career path."

One of Mrs. Walker's seventh grade ESP students, Angela Tebay, said that balancing her ESP work with other classes is easy. Angela's advice to the upcoming seventh graders is to "definitely go for it, and it can be for anyone."

The Makerspace class is taught by Mrs. Erin Snyder. On a typical day of this ESP course, the class has a group update, makes plans for the day, and then goes straight to work on their projects for the rest of the period. Mrs. Snyder's class requires a lot of planning because she has to gather so many supplies for the students, but she feels that the experience is worth it. "Makerspace ESP teaches students to think differently, and it also helps them to become more independent learners," she said.

Eighth grader, Cleo Cirunay, said that Makerspace is where students build things that haven't been invented yet. Cleo chose this ESP class because "it helps with critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity." Cleo balances her ESP work with her other required classes by getting time during and after class to complete the work, but it can be stressful at times. Her advice to the upcoming seventh graders is: "Enjoy the class, and be open to learning new things."

Jazz Band Offers Creative Outlet

BY MACKENZIE CHRISTLEY AND CLAIRE LANDON, EDITOR

The Butler Jazz Band has a long and honored history. Under the direction of Mr. Todd Karenbauer, members performed in two events this year over the course of eight months.

According to Mr. Karenbauer, he originally started the band because his daughter and her friends were all interested in jazz, and they asked him to create a club so they could get together and play. He said, "It was only seventh and eighth grade until we moved to the IHS. It eventually became a viable option to students who didn't make the big band." After the original group of members graduated, interest continued to grow so the jazz band has remained. "I keep going with the jazz band because every year the students amaze me," he said.

The audition process involves hours of practice and dedication. The piece that students are expected to play is the district jazz auction piece. Mr. Karenbauer commented, "This helps to eliminate fear for future auditions." As for what the band plays in concert, the music is selected based on where the band seems to be, and is chosen to push the students in the band. Mr. Karenbauer tries to select from different genres like funk, classical jazz, and other types of jazz.

Mr. Karenbauer said, "This year the jazz band was somewhat amazing. The kids really came out of their shells, and I love to see how kids start as shy little people and then become monsters in their section. I enjoy seeing people's comfort levels grow as well."

The jazz band is in place to help students grow as players and become leaders within the band and their sections. Having the jazz band also helps students be prepared to play and audition for the Tornado Big Band by setting expectations for their own playing abilities.

Maddie Kobert, an eighth grade trumpet player, was involved in the jazz band this year. She encourages people to audition for the band, as she thinks it was a great opportunity for her, and that in the future, her involvement in the band will lead to even bigger opportunities. Maddie said, "I play more confidently now, and I'm more willing to volunteer for new things." Julia Berquist, who is also currently in eighth grade and plays baritone saxophone in the band, said that she now plays more confidently, and her tone on her instrument has improved. She also said that she has a deeper understanding of different styles of music.

Maddie's biggest challenges she faced in preparations for her audition, and in playing in general, were counting more effectively and facing her fears of auditioning. With counting, she mentions that with solos she played, and really anything she plays, it's important to be on beat, and know where in the music you are. Maddie also had to work on her upper register, which has opened more opportunities for her in marching band and concert band. On the other hand, Julia said that learning to play jazz in general was the hardest part of her audition process. She said, "Definitely learning jazz. It's a completely different style of music than our normal concert music, so it was just really hard to learn." Jazz involves a lot more improvisation and steadier counting, so the difference between it and normal concert band music is extensive.

For students interested in auditioning for the band in the future, Mr. Karenbauer said that practicing and independence are the most important parts of doing well. He commented, "I can't practice for people. They need to be prepared and ready to go in rehearsals and in their auditions." Both Maddie and Julia credit practicing for their success, but Julia also mentioned relaxing. She said, "Calm down. It's a lot of fun, and it's not something you really need to stress about." She said the calmer she is when she's playing and auditioning, the better she is going to play.

Maddie wants other students to know what to practice. "Don't practice the parts that you're good at; practice what you need to work on." Everyone involved in the jazz band cites it as an educational, fun, and welcoming environment that has improved their playing in all bands they're involved in. Many of them are also looking forward to auditioning and playing in either the jazz or Big Band next year. As his final words of advice to students, Mr. Karenbauer said, "Just try-out. Your friends are doing it, and you should love music. Be one of the cool ones."



Above: The jazz band takes the stage.

Right: IHS members of the jazz band



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THE TORNADO CONNECTION

STUDENT SECTION

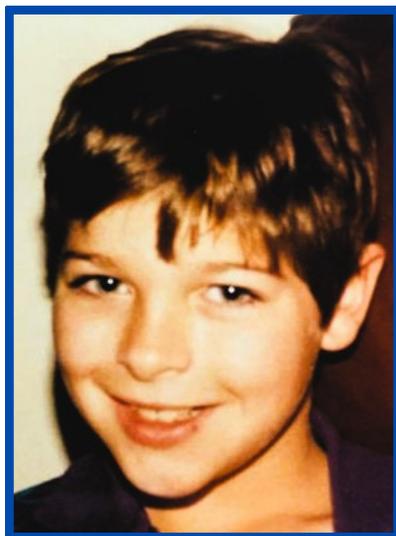
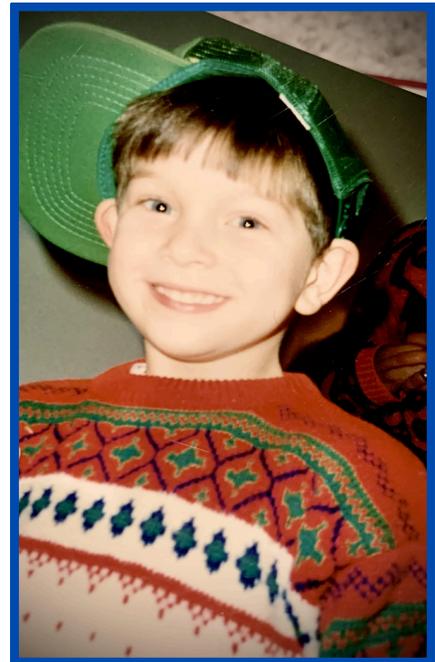
Who Am I?: Sixth Grade Mystery Teacher

BY DULCI CLARK AND KENLEY GILLILAND

This mystery sixth grade teacher attended Slippery Rock University because it had a good program for the subject he wanted to teach. He feels that it is very rewarding to see students grow. He teaches because he wants to share his talent with others. This sixth grade teacher has been teaching for 10 years and will continue to until he retires.

He grew up here in Butler. He has two daughters, one that is four years old and one that is almost six years old. The evening is his favorite time of the day. He doesn't exactly know where he will be in five years, he said, "Who knows the future? I am open to whatever life brings my way." The first thing he does in the morning is hit the snooze button. His hobbies include traveling, listening to music, watching the NFL, and painting. Outside of school, he runs his kids around everywhere.

His favorite food and drink is steak and water. A saying he tells his students a lot is, "Draw light 'til you get it right." The weirdest thing he has seen while driving is a lot of dollar bills flying on a highway outside of Philadelphia. The element on the periodic table that he relates to the most is H₂O because "it flows nicely."



Who Am I?: Seventh Grade Mystery Teacher

BY DULCI CLARK AND KENLEY GILLILAND

This seventh grade mystery teacher went to Clarion University because he had a sports scholarship. He enjoys teaching, as long as students are willing to learn. He chose to teach his subject because he thought it was boring to learn in school, and he wanted it to be fun for his students. This teacher has taught for 19 years and says that he will be teaching for "a few more unless I hit the lottery."

He was born in Indiana but moved to Butler and was raised here. He has three kids that are still in school. The last few periods of the school day are his favorite time of the day.

The first thing he does in the morning is get up and shower. His hobbies include golfing and pestering students. Outside of school, he enjoys riding dirtbikes, quads, ATVs, and being outside with his kids.

This mystery teacher's favorite drink is unsweetened tea. His favorite sayings are "gang gang" and "what up?" The weirdest thing he's seen while driving is a person laying in the middle of a road. He says that the element on the periodic table of elements that he relates to the most is gold.

Who Am I?: Eighth Grade Mystery Teacher

BY DULCI CLARK AND KENLEY GILLILAND

This mystery eighth grade teacher attended BC3 and Slippery Rock for college because it was affordable and they offered the courses she wanted to take. She loves teaching, especially the part when a student understands something and "gets a lightbulb." She teaches her subject because she likes to learn how and why things work the way they do. "It works the math and logic side of my brain," she said. She has been teaching for 31 years and will be teaching for four more.

She grew up in the Butler area and attended Knoch High School. Her children are 33 years old, 26 years old, and she has a two and a half year old grandchild. Her favorite part of the day is when she's in front of her classes teaching.



In five years, she sees herself retired and working part-time at a college teaching teachers or supervising student teachers. When she gets up in the morning, the first thing she does is make her bed. Her favorite hobbies are taekwondo, reading, and doing physical activities. Outside of school, she enjoys walking, supporting local bands, and going to the beach in the summer.

Her favorite food and drink is tuna and unsweetened iced tea. Her favorite saying is a quote from Christa McAuliffe: "I touch the future. I teach," because she wanted to use it as a reminder in her career. The weirdest thing she has seen while driving is a tractor trailer sliding into the middle of a highway during a snowstorm. The element on the periodic table of elements she relates to the most is titanium because it's "strong and durable."

Fond Memories of the 23-24 School Year

BY ELLA FOY AND ADDYSON KOCH

Students and staff from all grade levels reflected on the past school year and provided their fondest memories.

Sixth Grade

Adalee Froilan- "The kickball tournament"

Julianna Ward- "When Mr. Hilderbrand did an earthquake activity with a marshmallow"

Quinn Steyer- "The bottle flipping assembly"

Abigail Colonna- "Performing the lead in Matilda"

Ella Golab- "The kickball tournament"





Henry Koch- "Playing sports in gym"
 Tyler Coleman- "The kickball tournament"
 Reese Hilousky- "Country or country club day when I dressed as a golfer"
 Jarek Lapsley- "The kickball tournament"

Seventh Grade

Callie Marzolf- "Ella Foy falling down the stairs"
 Aaydn Dillow- "When Miss Cessna came"
 Rieger Rummel- "When Mr. Rock brought in crackers"
 Noah McCall- "Orchestra"
 Lyric Pappas- "Making fun of Mr. Casher"
 Penny Cherry- "When Mr. Rock had a mullet and Mrs. Lesjack had a flamingo floaty for an assembly"
 Sophie Easterbrook- "Making a craft book in Mr. Cochran's"
 Abby Pollock- "Making a candy salad at lunch"
 Ryder Sinsky- "The Alphabet Soup Club"
 Kylee Steinheiser- "Hanging out with friends and watching the boys get in trouble"



Eighth Grade

Landon Geibel- "English class with Mrs. Stone"
 Abigail Rivera- "My lunch table"
 Zane Schibel- "Cooking in family consumer science"
 Maddox Tack- "Math class"
 Sammie Jo-King- "Participating in the Goldilocks play"
 Mason Swidzinski- "Mr. Sciarro's class"
 Riley Clark- "Participating in the orchestra pops concert"
 Ashlyn Reinsel- "Hanging out with friends"
 Cody Gall- "Band"

Natalie Rivers- "The first day of school Starfish activities with the sixth graders"
 Chloe Watson- "Hanging out with friends"
 Cadence Waller- "Meeting new people"
 Rowan Zehmisch- "Going to Mr. Sciarro's class"



Staff

Mrs. Behrens- "Getting to meet my new ESP kids from each trimester"
Miss Carlson- "Meeting all of the new students"
Mr. Zihmer- "Interacting with my students in a positive way"
Mrs. Dietrich- "Playing 'Minute to Win It' with my students"
Mr. Rock- "Playing in the kickball tournament with the seventh graders"
Mrs. Reinhold- "Going on the Washington D.C. and Gettysburg field trips"
Mrs. Walter- "When the bat flew at Mrs. Runco and me"
Mr. Popovich- "The enthusiasm of decorating the halls for Christmas"
Mrs. Jones- "Watching the Starfish activities take place on the first day of school"
Mr. Frank- "Greeting students and teasing them at bag check"
Mrs. Kryl- "Everything I have learned from my students this year"
Mrs. Laska- "Witnessing the Ah-ha moment"
Mr. Starr- "Getting thank you notes from kids"



Sixth Grade Student Spotlight: Luke Macko

BY NEVA' AUVIL AND GRACIE HUFF

Luke Macko is a 12-year-old boy who lives with his mom and dad. He has one dog named Max. His favorite subject is history because it is very easy. Luke's dream vacation destination is Hawaii because he loves to go snorkeling.

Luke is involved in Best Buddies because he enjoys helping others. He said, "It is so much fun, and it makes me feel good when I help others." His teachers are Mrs. Meskel, Mr. McKinley, and Mr. McMillen. Luke packs his lunch everyday, and his favorite snack to pack is goldfish crackers. His advice to incoming sixth graders is: "Try your hardest at every class." Luke enjoys playing basketball and baseball outside of school.

Seventh Grade Student Spotlight: Jude Perhacs

BY NEVA' AUVIL AND GRACIE HUFF

Jude Perhacs is a 13-year-old boy who lives with his mom, dad, and sister, Sienna. He has two dogs named Fitz and Woody. Jude stated, "I love them." When he is older, he would like to become a soccer player or a coach because of his love for the sport. His favorite subject is lunch because it is like a recess to him. Jude's dream vacation destination is Spain because he would love to see Barcelona, Madrid, El Clasico, and he wants to get a good tan.

Jude is involved in Best Buddies, Chess Club, and he owns Fight of the Films. His teachers are Mrs. Kravitz, Mrs. Sankey, Mr. Rock, and Dr. DeThomas. Jude's favorite school lunch is the drumsticks, mashed potatoes, and biscuits. His advice to incoming seventh graders is: "Get yourself involved in extracurricular activities." Jude enjoys playing/watching soccer, drawing, track and field, playing viola, and playing video games.



Eighth Grade Student Spotlight: Malaya Azarcon

BY NEVA' AUVIL AND GRACIE HUFF

Malaya Azarcon is a 14-year-old girl who lives with her mom, dad, and her two sisters, Tala and Kaya. Malaya has two bunnies named Bradley and Juniper. When she is older, she would like to be an author because she enjoys writing stories in her free time. Her favorite subject is math because she loves to solve puzzles and equations. Malaya's dream vacation destination is India because she wants to see the Taj Mahal.

Although Malaya is involved in NJHS, she is not in any other school clubs. Her teachers are Mr. McCool, Mrs. Walter, Mr. Kasperek, Ms. McKinsey, Mrs. Reich, Mrs. Tepper, and Mrs. Armahizer. Malaya's favorite school lunch is the french toast and tater tots because "they are amazing." Her advice to incoming eighth graders is: "Be humble and respectful to all of your teachers, and make friends that will last through high school." Malaya enjoys playing soccer, writing down ideas for novels, playing with her bunny, and taking quizzes on quotev in her free time.

Students Stay Busy With Club Sports

BY JOHNNY HUNTSMAN AND ANDREW WOLFE

Students in the BIHS invest their time in club sports, in and out of season. Some of these sports include ice hockey, baseball, and lacrosse.

Many students participate in club ice hockey. Isaac Paraska plays AAA ice hockey for Pittsburgh Vengeance. He started playing when he was four years old and said he loves it because it's the first sport he ever played. He plays left wing because he finds it fun, and he enjoys the sport because he is able to play it with friends. His most memorable moment was when he and his team won the PAHL championship in 2021. His idol is Sidney Crosby, and he rates himself 5/10 and thinks others would agree. Most importantly, he believes that Oreo cages, cage gang and flow are sty. He skates 2-3 days a week and has spent around \$5,000 this year on ice hockey. He would recommend this sport to everyone because it's fun to play and it's an exciting way to hang out with friends.

Brenna Wincer also plays AAA for Pittsburgh Vengeance and for Butler. She has been playing since she was eight years old and plays left wing and center because those are the positions she feels she's best at. Her most memorable moment was when she won her first championship. The hardest thing she's had to overcome playing is leaving her first team. Her idol is Mario Lemieux. She considers sty to be when people wear different colored helmets. She would rate herself a solid 12/10 and thinks others would agree. She plays around five days a week and has spent too much money this year. According to Brenna, she would recommend this sport to others. "Ice hockey teaches valuable lessons," she said.

Baseball is another popular club sport. Some people that play for the BIHS include Nathan Benedek and Torin Bell. Nathan plays for the Butler freshman team and Pittsburgh Backyard Baseball. He has been playing baseball since he was five years old and thinks it's fun to play. Nathan plays third base and pitcher for backyard baseball and left field for the Butler freshman baseball team. His most memorable moment of the Butler freshman season was going 1-11, but it was also one of the hardest things he has had to overcome while playing baseball. Nathan would rate himself a 7/10 for baseball. His idol that plays baseball is Boden Lenyk who plays for Butler Varsity. He considers his ice cream sliding mit to be sty and roughly spends about \$3000 and four days a week on baseball games and practices. He would recommend this sport to others because he likes the sport and thinks it is fun to play.

Torin Bell plays for the Butler freshman team and the PA Redhawks. He has been playing since he was four years old and plays first base and pitcher. "I throw absolute gas," he said. His most memorable moments in baseball are the bus ride home from away games. He would rate himself a 8.5/10, and his idol is Buster Posey who played first base and catcher for the Giants. During his time playing the sport, Torin has had many injuries including breaking his elbow, tearing a ligament, and breaking his finger. He considers a back pocket Oreo sliding mitt and short pants to be sty and roughly spends about 3-4 days per week practicing baseball and \$2500 per year for baseball. According to Torin, "If you work hard everyday, then hard work will pay off."

The final sport on the list is lacrosse. A few students who play club lacrosse include Gabe Jolly, Azra Paraska, and Haley Norris. Gabe Jolly plays Silver Tier Lacrosse for Butler, and he has been playing since he was 10. "I play attack because I don't have to run as much and get to score goals, and sometimes I play middle because it's fun." His most memorable moment was this year in whole because he started at attack and was the captain of the team. His idol is Cris Kavanagh and would rate himself a 10/10 on keeping the bench warm, but at playing he'd rate himself a 6/10. He believes that tilt, BTB, and walking the dog are sty in lacrosse. He is playing seven days a week and has spent around \$500 this year on lacrosse. He would absolutely recommend this sport to others because it can help with your teamwork, handling, and team building.

Next up is Azra Paraska who plays for the Butler's 14u women's lacrosse team and started playing when she was 14 years old. Her most memorable moment was playing her first ever lacrosse game, and her idol is Zoey Zandarski. Azra would rate herself a 7/10 and thinks others would agree. She thinks of sty to be when someone's hair is slicked back and plays around 3 days a week and has spent under \$1000 this year on lacrosse. She would recommend this sport to others because it's fun and entertaining.

Haley Norris also plays lacrosse for Butler. She has been playing lacrosse since she was 11 years old and she plays attack because she is fast and brings the ball from other players and brings it back to the zone. Her most memorable moment while playing is when they earned second place in a tournament, and her idol is Addi Pino because she is very good at the sport. She thinks she is an 8/10 and thinks others would agree. The hardest thing she has ever had to overcome in lacrosse was when she misses a shot on the goal to score. She roughly spends around three days a week and \$200 a year on lacrosse and considers eye black as “sty” in lacrosse. She would recommend this sport to others because it is a fun sport to play.

SUMMER WORD SEARCH

Search for the twelve Summer themed words below.



- | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| BARBECUE | LEMONADE | SUNSCREEN |
| BEACH | POOL | SWIMMING |
| FLIP FLOPS | SUMMER | VACATION |
| ICE CREAM | SUNGLASSES | WATERMELON |



Spring 2024 Tornado Connection Staff