



NEWSLETTER

Amity Middle School – Bethany Campus – 190 Luke Hill Road Bethany, CT 06524
Visit us on the web at www.amityregion5.org

February, 2006

From the Principal

Dear Students and Families:

Time marches on... and we already have started the second half of this school year! While we had a wonderful array of activities during the first semester, there are several more special events quickly approaching.

Orientation to Amity High School: There will be an “Eighth Grade Parent Night” on Wednesday, February 1, at 7:00 P.M. in the Amity High School gym. This is an orientation program for all parents/guardians who have children entering Amity High School in September.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent/Teacher conference request forms were sent home recently with report cards. Conferences will be scheduled on February 9 and 16, through the guidance office. If you have any questions please call 393-3103.

CMT Testing: We will be administering the CMT tests to all seventh and eighth graders from March 1 through March 10. Regular homework assignments will be reduced during the CMT administration. It is very important that all students try their best and get a good night’s sleep before each test.

Finally, we will be having our winter recess from February 20 through February 24. On behalf of the entire staff, have a safe, relaxing, and enjoyable winter break.

Very truly yours,

Richard Dellinger

PTO Message

The PTO would like to welcome all new Faculty and Staff who have started in 2006. In January, the PTO sponsored two very well received programs. The first a “Shakesperience” production was thoroughly enjoyed by the students. The second program was Salsa dancing facilitated by AMS nurse Kendra Luth. In case you missed the news story live on Channel 8, you can go to the WTNH.com website, type in Bethany Middle School, and watch Matt Scott’s report.

The next Teacher’s Coffee and...hosted by the PTO will be Wednesday, February 8. Anyone interested in contributing food or their time to setup, please contact Karen Lockhart.

If you shop at Big Y or Adams Supermarkets, don’t forget to sign up and make Amity Middle School-Bethany, your designated school when using your savings card. Our school directly benefits through this special savings program.

The School Directories were distributed on January 9 and additional copies are available for purchase. It’s always handy to have another directory especially in your car. Please contact Judith Hess or Janet Hershman if you would like to buy a second directory.

Show your school spirit by ordering Amity Wear. A must have for this spring. A great gift for everyone - kids, parents, grandparents, and alumni of Amity Middle School. Look for the order form in this Newsletter.

The next PTO meeting will be Tuesday, February 7 at 9:00am. The March meeting will be on Thursday, March 16 at 7:00 P.M. at the High School. Both Amity Middle Schools and Amity High School PTOs will be attending this meeting as well. Please join us at one or both of these meetings.

Club Time

Congratulations to.....

Art teacher, Sara Frank who was awarded a \$2,500



Best Buy Teacher Award to integrate digital technology into her art curriculum. Sara plans to buy three digital cameras and other supplies to embellish her art program.

Counselors' Comments



CMT ALERT!

(Connecticut Mastery Test)

When: March 1 through March 10 (8 days)
Who: All 7th and 8th grade students
Where: Individual Classrooms
Length: 8 days – One test each day in the morning

This test is required by the State of CT to measure student achievement.

Suggestions to Parents/Guardians/Students:

Preparation: Students should be well rested and have eaten breakfast.

Supplies: Please bring a calculator.

During the test: Follow directions, use practice materials, use time wisely, read carefully and check answers.

Staff from the Milford Rape Crisis Center will be in Physical Education classes the week of February 13. They will be discussing harassment, healthy relationships, and internet safety.

Character trait for the month of January was persistence. The following students (exhibiting this characteristic) were recognized by teachers: Colleen Oleynik, Kevin Dempsey, Alexis Parente, Vincent Canepari, Kaitlyn Paz and Daniel Duhaime.

Character trait for the month of February will be integrity.

Starting in February, our resiliency committee has initiated a “club time” for our students every other Friday. Students will be attending clubs of their choice for 35 minutes at the end of the day. The purpose of this time is to help foster and develop resiliency in both school staff and students by enhancing student/teacher relationships and allowing students an opportunity to learn and try new activities. Some of our club offerings include: knitting, calligraphy, chess club, book club, word games and puzzles, percussion techniques and ensemble club, weight training and fitness club. Clubs will run through mid May.

Nutmeg Book Award Winner



Wednesday, January 18, was Nutmeg Day at Amity Middle School as students voted for their favorite Nutmeg title.

The list of titles, selected for grades 7 and 8 by a state wide committee, was presented to Amity students in June so they could begin reading over the summer. Again, in September, students listened to book talks about the following 10 titles:

<i>Bronx Masquerade</i>	<i>House of the Scorpion</i>
<i>Full Tilt</i>	<i>Hush</i>
<i>Goblin Wood</i>	<i>Soldier Boys</i>
<i>Goddess of Yesterday</i>	<i>Things Not Seen</i>
<i>Hoot</i>	<i>Touching Spirit Bear</i>

Students who read at least one of the titles were encouraged to vote for their favorite book. All who participated received “I voted” stickers and a Smartees candy. Over 275 students voted in the election and the winning title is *Hoot!*

Nature's Classroom



7th Grade Parents/Guardians:

Registration for Nature's Classroom (March 13-17) will continue until February vacation.

We expect to take a large percentage of our seventh grade students on this outdoor educational experience. Financial assistance is available for scholarships and/or necessary equipment. Please call Paul Yashenko, Guidance Counselor at 393-0291.

Science Center Field Trip 7th grade Randall Team

It was a starry, starry night in the middle of the day. How so, you might ask? Well, the 7th graders in the Randall team enjoyed a field trip to the Connecticut Science Center on Wednesday, January 25. Shortly after arrival, students gathered in the planetarium to view the presentation ***Oceans in Space*** which gave them some insight into the “*conditions necessary to form and sustain life on Earth, Mars, and beyond.*” After the presentation the students and their chaperones explored all the other exciting exhibits before having lunch and then returning to the planetarium to view ***Explorers of Mauna Kea***. This presentation dealt with the formation of the Hawaiian Islands millions of years ago. A hands-on, interactive demonstration which simulated the technology featured in the telescopes on Mauna Kea allowed students to discover how numerous small mirrors can multiply reflected light more easily than one large mirror. The planetarium docent also showed students the current night sky in Bethany, highlighting various constellations. A good time was had by all.

Winter Solstice with the 7th grade Goldstein Team

On December 22 and 23, the 7th Grade Goldstein Team celebrated the arrival of the Winter Solstice with a variety of team activities. Students moved through various hands-on stations learning about the history of the Winter Solstice. Students charted the length of daylight as the Earth revolves around the sun and noted that, in fact, after December 21, the length of daylight actually begins to increase! Students also made “pomanders.” Pomanders are oranges studded with cloves. The making of pomanders was an ancient ritual practiced by the pagans. Oranges represented the sun and the cloves were believed to ward off evil spirits. In addition, students listened to instrumental music while creating abstract art. Students were then asked to describe the artwork of their classmates using only descriptive adjectives. Once in the computer lab, artwork was digitally downloaded and students created poems reflecting their masterpieces using only the adjectives their classmates had provided. The 7th Grade Goldstein Team has some *very creative* minds. A festive time was had by all!

Mega Ace Team Hosts Renaissance Day

After learning about the Renaissance and the advances made in the arts during the period, the 8th grade ACE-Mega Team enjoyed a visit from a real acting troupe! Tony and Erin from Shakesperience Productions, Inc. of Waterbury educated students about the life and times of the famous playwright William Shakespeare and also provided some comic relief during the performance. (Even Dr. Dellinger got in on the fun! He played a very convincing female.) The stellar performance was accompanied by Shakespearean activities in Social Studies classes that day as well. In Social Studies, some students played Shakespearean Bingo and others learned about Shakespeare’s sonnets.

Students in Mrs. Carvalho's French and Spanish classes studied the birth of the Romance languages from Latin and compared different words in the different languages. Discussion included foreign language study and use by the people of the times. After a brief lesson in Italian numbers 1-50, students played number bingo with the Italian and French or Spanish numbers.

Students in Ms. Diehl’s math classes viewed a slide presentation about Leonardo DaVinci. Leonardo had great visions of the future and drew inventions which were ahead of his time. Students viewed his designs for machines such as helicopters, gliders and scientific drawings. Students also became aware of the proportions which Leonardo discovered. Ratio and proportion are important mathematical concepts which Leonardo used in drawing. Students viewed a drawing of the face and discussed the proportions which Leonardo had drawn.

Mrs. Nork's and Mrs. Habersang's science classes created parachutes modeled after Leonardo DaVinci's original design. In 1483, DaVinci sketched plans for the first parachute ever using wood, canvas and rope. It weighed 187 lbs and was 7 meters long! DaVinci never tested the parachute himself, but the 8th grade science classes experimented with his model using plastic bags, newspaper and string. Many of the students used DaVinci's unique pyramid design, while others tried to create their own successful parachutes.

With much thanks to the PTO for funding the program, the students had a great time and learned a lot.

Reminders from the Nurse

- Spring Sports – If your child’s last physical was prior to June 14, 2005, and they are planning to play baseball, softball or track, an updated physical must be turned into the health office prior to tryouts. Please call School Nurse Kendra Luth at 393-4039 if you have any questions regarding your child’s physical.
- 7th graders: Please remember that all 3 hepatitis B vaccine doses must be completed prior to entering grade 8. Please hand in any updated vaccines to the health office.
- Substitute nurses are still needed in the Amity District. Please contact Deborah Farber at 397-4821 if you are a nurse and interested in being part of the sub pool.

Tip of the Month: Planning a February vacation get-away? Whether you will be basking in the tropical sun or hitting the slopes.....remember to apply sunscreen to all exposed areas with a SPF of 15 or higher.

Student Council Activities

The student council officers have asked their members to participate in two initiatives in the coming month:

1. A fundraiser for the "Starfish" organization which assists children in Africa who are affected by AIDS.

Members will be selling "bouquets" of lollipops beginning on January 25th. They will be delivered on Valentine's Day.

2. A locker-decorating contest to celebrate the 100th day of school on February 3rd.

Prizes will be given for students or groups of students whose locker door is decorated to commemorate this milestone. Categories (color, school spirit, creativity) and rules for entry will be printed on a flyer for distribution to all homerooms.

Thank you,
Kathy Habersang and Donna Stanford - Advisors

Thank you to

- The PTO for sponsoring the Shakespeare Theatre production for the eighth grades and for sponsoring the Salsa Dancing program for all PE classes.

- Toby Zabinski, Media Specialist and our English teachers for conducting the Nutmeg Book Award balloting.
- Reading teacher Tammy Saisa and her student staff for the latest edition of our student newsletter, The Spartan Forum.
- Social Studies teacher Thayer Doyle who arranged a special guest to do an Egyptian slide presentation in one of his social studies classes.
- English teacher Nicole Knott for making the arrangements to have the Shakespeare Theater Workshops and to all eighth grade teachers for their cooperation with the outstanding program and related activities.
- Nurse Kendra Luth and the PE staff for organizing Salsa dancing in PE classes. The classes were instructed by Alisa Bowens an Amity graduate who formally attended Bethany Junior High. In addition....thank you to Kendra for arranging the Channel 8 TV coverage by Matt Scott!

Woodbridge & Orange Youth Services



There will be a ski trip to Mt. Southington on Wednesday, February 22, for all Woodbridge, Bethany and Orange residents in 7th and 8th grades.

The cost is \$40 for a lift ticket only; \$56 for ski rental and lift ticket; \$59 for snowboard rental and lift ticket. Group lessons are available for both skiing and snowboarding. Call 389-3429 for prices. All fees include bus transportation, taxes, and gratuities. Bus pickup will be approximately 9:00 A.M. at Woodbridge Center Building. Space is limited. Call now for reservations at 389-3429



Computer Corner

If you would like to have a management and editing program for your digital pictures but don't want to invest in expensive programs like PhotoShop, Google is offering the free download of *Picasa*. Take a tour of Picasa's features at

<http://picasa.google.com/index.html>.

In addition, Windows XP also includes a very basic editing program as part of its system. To access it, right click on a digital photo, and go to "open with" and choose "Microsoft Office Picture Manager." Click on "edit pictures" and explore your options.