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A Student Newspaper

Fall Edition 2012

The Castle Caller

kNOw Bullying Launches into Effect

By Rebecca Schell & Alexandra Miglas*
Senior Reporter & Junior Reporter

The Castle's kickoff for the HASD's Anti-bullying program, *kNOw Bullying*, was held on October 1. The main goal of the program is to educate children about what bullying is and to encourage them to speak out if they are being bullied. The program will continue over several years by having teachers use anti-bullying lessons to inform students and help give them a voice. This curriculum is to become a model not only statewide, but nationally too.

Mr. Kassick began the program by singing the *Star Spangled Banner*, with Mrs. Shemansky following pumping up the crowd.

Seventh grade teacher Mr. Hearne spoke about his own personal experience being bullied during his childhood because of his Irish accent. He also cracked a few jokes, of course.

Hazleton Police Chief Frank DeAndrea then spoke about how his daughter was bullied for 3 ½ years. She stopped going out with friends, playing sports and texting, and instead, she read. Little did he know, she was being bullied.

Reporter Andy Mehalshick from WBRE Eyewitness News then spoke. He asked children to raise their hands if they have ever seen someone being bullied. Then he asked children to raise their hands if they had ever done something about it. Fewer children raised their hands the second time.

Mehalshick also stated he



HEMS student representatives release blue balloons into the sky to symbolize letting go of bullying on October 1, 2012.

does not like to cover sad news, such as the recent tragic events. He wants to cover happy news. He ended by saying, "Bullies are cowards. They're just trying to show off!"

The 5th grade chorus consisting of Mr. Sharp's and Mrs. Gasper's classes, under the direction of elementary music teacher Mrs. Gogola, performed songs about getting rid of bullying from the "Inside Out!"

The Mounts cheerleaders pumped up the crowd and performed two cheers telling students to "Just Be Nice" to each other and telling bullies they "Better Think Twice."

Student council president Brian Harry and secretary Ciara Bannon recited the school pledge, promising to stop bullying. The entire school stood, raised their right hands and recited the pledge.

A parade, led by student council members carrying large, white banners with the *kNOw Bullying* logo written in blue, concluded the rally with the entire student body walking around the school ending on the front steps of the Castle for the balloon release. Behind them walked the Hazleton Area Marching Cougars band followed by the Mountaineer cheerleaders.

At the sound of the Hazleton Fire truck's horn, blue balloons were then released into the air symbolizing letting go of bullying. Two student representatives were chosen from each homeroom to release the balloons. The HAHS band stood by continuously playing music, and the entire study body roared and cheered as the balloons flew up into the bright, sunshine filled sky. (More pictures from the Anti-bullying event on p. 3)

A brief bullying survey was conducted the day of the *kNOw bullying* rally with a combination of teachers and students. Out of the forty people asked if they were ever bullied in their lives, twenty-six said yes they were bullied, while 14 had never been.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

News	1
Insight	2
Features	3
Sports	4
Clubs	5
Poll & Staff	6

INSIGHT

Anti-Bullying Program: A Day in Review



Left: Hazleton Police Chief Frank DeAndrea and WBRE's Andy Mehalchick pose outside the HEMS auditorium before the Anti-Bullying Rally.

Right: HMS Mounts cheerleaders fire up the crowd with their cheers to "Just Say No" to bullying.



7th grade teacher Mr. Hearne speaks to a full auditorium about his bullying experiences.



HMS student council members lead the parade carrying a kNOw Bullying banner. HEMS students in grades 3-8 marched around the school in support of the new Anti-Bullying program the HASD is launching.



WBRE reporter Andy Mehalchick interviews sixth grader Alec Plesh about his views on bullying in the schools and the community.



Students anxiously wait to release blue balloons into the air to symbolize letting go of bullying.

FEATURES

New Faces in New Places

By Yuliana Martinez & Aimee Medina
Junior Reporters

Who are the new seventh and eighth grade teachers? We had a chance to talk with the new teachers to find out.

Eighth grade foreign language teacher **Mrs. Vernon** said even though she taught at the 9th Grade Center last year, she is really happy about teaching here at the Castle.

We asked some students what they thought about Mrs. Vernon. **Samantha Diaz**, **Adam Saleh**, and **Issac Perez** all

agreed that Mrs. Vernon is nice. Although Saleh said you have to behave or that changes. We'll take his word for it.

Mr. Gartland, middle school art, is only staying for the first quarter. **Dominique Despirito**, eighth grade, is sad about that because she really enjoys his class. **Margaret Fulton**, eighth grade, said he is an amazing teacher. **Alondra Barbecho**, eighth grade, agreed with both girls.



Miss Vernon



Miss Gelgot

We also talked to two seventh graders about their

Gelgot. Eden Vitacco said she can be tough at times but she can also be nice.

Nicole Gutierrez, seventh grade, also feels that Miss Gelgot is really nice.

We'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all three teachers and new students to Hazleton Middle School, and wish them a successful school year. Even if they aren't your teachers, say hello to welcome them to our school anyway!

Get Involved at HMS!

By Yulimar Abreu, Jen Arias, & Nisel Florentino
Junior Reporters

School's back! Most of the middle school students already have planned what activities they are going to participate in this year at HEMS. Students, like seventh grader **Bryan Marte**, are looking forward to the dances because he wants to party!

Seventh grader **Adriana Alfieri** is looking forward to making new friends and joining one of the many middle school clubs.

Erika Castro, seventh grade, is looking forward to all the activities the student council has planned this year. She is also looking forward to cheering at the

games and going to the school dances.

Jhon Stan, eighth grade, is wondering what the dances are going to be like. He, too, is excited about going to those.

It's not only students who are excited about the school year, but teachers are too. **Mrs. Shebelock**, seventh grade science teacher, said she is looking forward to doing many fun science experiments with her students this year.

Looks like it is going to be a fun year filled with a lot of excitement and activities. It's not too late to get involved. Join a club or attend a dance to become part of the fun.

Creative Costumes

By Leiry Rumaldo and Gabriella Tomax
Junior Reporters

Blood suckers roam around looking for a snack and witches ride their brooms on this eerie night. Why it's Halloween night of course.

Even if you didn't want to dress up, it's still fun to see the creatures roaming at night.

Some of the HMS students and staff were kind enough to share their costume ideas with us ahead of time.

Jonathan Pozniak, seventh grade, was going to be a vampire. Fangs, blood, and cape, what's not to love?

Hope Kinney, eighth grade, was going to be an octopus. Creative and fun, but it just might be hard to move in.

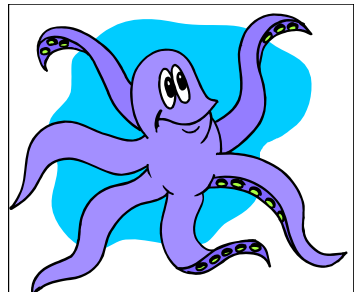
Seventh graders **Alana Gadola** and **Cassidy Lugo**, both planned to be a fairies. What an awesome and adora-

ble costume, girls! It looks like we had two little fairies spreading fairy dust.

Leyole Garcia, eighth grade, was going to chill and be a banana. Interesting.

Jordi Soto, eighth grade, planned to be a gangster baby. What a unique idea!

No matter what costume you chose, Halloween is a fun time to pretend and be silly.



Editor's Note:

Tracey Vasquez and Rosalia Pagan did not make their editorial deadline with their article "Halloween Traditions" for the Features section.

SPORTS

New Year Equals New Cheer

By Natalie Gonzalez*
Junior Reporter

I'd like to give a big Mountaineer welcome to the new 2012-2013 Mountaineer cheerleading squad. Hard work and dedication was shown by all girls this summer while everyone else was enjoying the summer vacation.

Over the summer the girls practiced twice a week and attended a three day summer camp at the 9th Grade Center. The camp was run by the HAHS Cougar cheerleaders.

The following eighth grade girls are returning members of the squad: Estephany Peguero (Captain), Patricia Espinal, Leyole Garica (Co-Captain), Natalie Gonzalez (this reporter), and Theanny Velasco (Co-captain). Other eighth grade members include Leiry Rumaldo, Theresa Schreffler and Maria Torres. Seventh grade members are Jessica Bric, Naomi Calderon, Erika Castro, Diofranny Correa, Ashleigh Correll, Stephanie Florentino, Heilyn Lara, Jessica McPherson, Nicole Ritz, Nicole Smith and Jasmine Villareal.



The 2012-2013 Hazleton Mounts cheerleading squad poses in West Hazleton before the Funfest Parade begins. The theme of the parade was *Christmas in September*.



The Mounts cheerleaders march and cheer down Broad Street in West Hazleton during the Funfest Parade on September 9, 2012.



for any seventh or eighth grade student who is interested in becoming a member of the squad.

The Mountaineer cheerleaders are coached by my Mrs. O'Donnell.

The squad has already participated in many amazing events, including the Funfest Parade in September and the Anti-bullying program on October 1. Currently the girls are preparing for the upcoming basketball sea-

son, which will begin in December. They will also participate in a competition in 2013.

A future clinic will be held in the spring for any student interested in learning how to cheer. Tryouts will be in May

Editor's Note: Kadasia Murdough and Shaniece Boyd did not make their editorial deadline with their article "Where is Lady Mounts Basketball?"

CLUBS

High School Ski Club Opened to Middle School

By Mrs. O'Donnell
Castle Caller Editor/Advisor

Living in northeastern Pennsylvania gives you an opportunity to take advantage of the many outdoor recreational activities available. As we approach the winter season, some of those exciting activities are skiing and snowboarding. There are many ski resorts in the Poconos, which is located a little less than an hour away from Hazleton. Even closer to the Hazleton area, we have Eagle Rock Ski Resort, which is located on

Route 924, approximately 15 minutes away.

Fortunately for HASD students in 7th-12th grade, the ski club will provide you with the opportunity to go skiing and/or snowboarding with your friends. If any seventh or eighth grader is interested in joining this exciting club, a meeting was just held on Thursday, November 1 in the Hazleton Area High School auditorium. The club advisor is high school teacher Mr. Jeff

Koch. Permission slips are available on his webpage, which can be found by going to the high school website at www.hasdk12.org and selecting Hazleton Area High School--then select Teachers--then select Koch, J. On his webpage menu, click on Ski Club, which is located towards the bottom of the list.

The ski club will be traveling to Big Boulder Ski Resort in the Poconos this winter. Take advantage of this club!



Student Council Makes Plans for Year

By Vivian Ruiz and Tori Vache'
Senior Reporters

Student council is a service organization that helps in both the school and the community. The first meeting was held Thursday, September 27th, and the committee planned the upcoming events for the school year.

Some of their projects include the annual food drive for the Salvation Army, as well as a United Charities Cold Hand Warm Hearts clothing drive for hats, gloves and mittens at Christmas time.

Student council members help the PTA with various projects throughout the year. They also hold two dances each year, including the Harvest Dance, which was held on October 26 and the Valentine's Dance in February.

The Harvest Dance was recently held on Friday, October 26. The student council did an amazing job planning, decorating, and hosting the



2012-2013 Student council officers: (From left) Jordan Moose, Fundraising; Ciara Bannon, Secretary; Brian Harry, President; Jerry Gasser, Vice-President.

dance. Everyone had an amazing time and cannot wait until February for the Valentine's Dance.

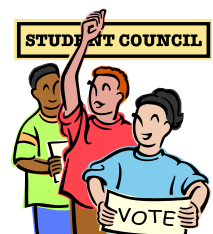
Student council is advised by fifth grade teacher Ms. DeLucca. We would like to congratulate this year's new members and officers. They are all very enthusiastic and willing to help out as much as can in the school and the com-

munity this year.

This year the members for seventh grade are Jessica Bric, Alvin Cabrera, Erika Castro, Anthony Colon, Diofranny Correa, Ashleigh Correll, Kim Bellard, Jessica Cusatis, Stephanie Florentino, Heilyn Lara, Cassidy Lugo, Jessica McPherson, Nicole Ritz, Rebecca Rossi and Electra Vitacco.

The eighth grade members include Ciara Bannon, Leyole Garica, Jerry Gasser, Natalie Gonzalez, Brian Harry, Carson Kinney, Joelle Marchese, Jordan Moose, Frank Musso-line, Destiny Nika, Anthony Palaggi, Estephany Peguero, Gabriel Pujois, Selena Sanchez, Jordi Soto, and Joshua Walper.

The officers were voted on and selected by the members of the student council. Those selected are as follows: President, Brian Harry; Vice-President, Jerry Gasser; Secretary, Ciara Bannon; and Fundraising/Community Service Chairperson, Jordan Moose.



MOUNT'S CORNER CHAT

By: Ashley Acosta, Alyssa Garcia & Sam Diaz*

Research by: Alvin Cabrera

Junior Reporters

What is your favorite season?

22% **Winter** 46% **Summer**

6% **Spring** 26% **Fall**

*Poll based on answers from approximately 100 teachers and students at HMS.

Our nice hot summer is over and the brisk fall season is here, with cold winter fast approaching. We decided to ask students what season is their favorite time of year in northeast PA. Some may find the results surprising, while others will totally agree.

Many students enjoy the summer season. Eighth grader **Dalesa Mendoza** said her favorite season is summer because there is no school and she could go to the beach and the lake.

Eighth grader **Natalie Gonzalez** said, "My favorite season is summer because I love to hang out and have BBQ's with friends and family...and cheerleading."

Seventh grader **Naomi Calderon** likes the summer season also because there is no school. Plus her birthday is during the summer months so she really likes that.

David Morales, also seventh grade, said, "I like summer because you can do a lot of outdoor activities."

Middle school teachers like **Mr. Schifano** like the summer as well because of vacation. **Mr. Hudock** likes summer because he can spend time with his family.

Several students enjoy the current season of fall. Seventh grader **Omar Diaz** said, "My favorite season is fall because I like making leaf piles and jumping into it."

Michelle Almonte, seventh grade, said, "I like fall because I like when the leaves fall and there (are) colorful trees."

Eighth grader **Wendy Pichardo** said, "My favorite season is fall because of the colorful leaves and because I am going to try out for basketball."

There are a few people who enjoy the cold temps of the winter season. **Isaac Perez**, eighth grade, said winter is his favorite season because it is when boy's basketball starts.

Karen Gil, seventh grade, said she likes winter because there is snow and you can have snowball fights. Plus, she said Christmas is just around the corner.

Mr. Vigna, eighth grade career exploration teacher, likes snow too, so winter is his favorite season.

Finally, we get to the season of spring. Not too many people enjoy this season. It may be because this season usually has a lot of rain. But seventh grade reading teacher **Mrs. Dudeck** it is her favorite season because everything outside is beginning to bud and grow. She said it's symbolic and it energizes her.

Summer is the overall winner with 46% of the vote. Fall follows in second place with 26%. Winter takes a close third with 22% and spring comes in last with only 6% of the vote.

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