

The Castle Caller

Gifted Class 1st in NASA Competition Second Year in a Row

By Rebecca Schell & Alexandra Miglas
Senior Reporter & Junior Reporter

“The first place winner of the NASA Extremophiles competition is...Hazleton Middle School!”

You read that right, NASA! Eighth grade gifted students, under the supervision of Mrs. S. Sharp, represented our school at the NASA Endeavor Astrobiology Competition at King’s College on February 14, 2013. The competition consisted of students in Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 in both public and parochial schools. Students had to study an extremophile and create an extraterrestrial habitat that could sustain its life functions.

Extremophiles are bacteria or archaea that can survive in extreme conditions that other creatures cannot. The extremophile they chose to work with was *Geogemma Barossii*, which lives around deep sea hydrothermal vents on the sea floor.

After the judging by other schools, college stu-



From left to right: (Back row) Christian Halliday, Jerry Gasser, Victoria Vache, and Brian Harry. (Front row) Ciara Bannon and Rebecca Schell.

dents, teachers, and NASA ambassadors was done, our school was awarded first place again!

While at Kings College, the students built rovers to “travel” on mars. They also talked to real NASA engineers!

The eighth grade gift-

ed students are Ciara Banon, Brian Harry, Jerry Gasser, Christian Halliday, Victoria Vache, and Rebecca Schell.

These students worked from December to February on this project, and their hard work really paid off!

The gifted students were interviewed, and they all said they enjoyed the project and would compete again. When asked what part of the project was the most fun for them, Ciara said seeing the results. Jerry and Brian said researching. Rebecca said putting it all together. And Tori said building the rovers. Christian was not present for the interview.

All the students had fun, while learning something new. Congratulations Mrs. Sharp and your eighth grade gifted students!

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INSIGHT

Winter Activity Highlights



(Above): Seventh and eighth grade HMS students pose to make a memory after the Valentine's Dance on Friday, February 22, 2013.

(Below): 8th grade cheerleaders pose with their trophies at their farewell home game of the season in February.



(Above): Mounts player #32, Frank Musoline, shoots for two while Mounts #23, Kyle Plesh, looks to get the rebound at the final home game against the Valley Eagles on February 13, 2013.

(Below): Coach DeNoia huddles with the eighth grade basketball team during a time-out at a home game this season. Under DeNoia, the team enjoyed a successful season, went to playoffs, and finished 2nd in the Boys' Anthracite Basketball League. Congratulations to the team and coaches DeNoia and Silva.



FEATURES

HMS Clubs Support Important Cause

By Yuliana Martinez and Yasmina Dzairi*
Junior Reporters

The members of the sixth grade Community Service Club and the Student Council were collecting donations for their annual contribution to the America Cancer Society. The donation presentation was made at the telethon that was held on Saturday, February 24th at the Laurel Mall in Hazle Township.

Sixth grade Community Service Club advisor Mrs. Cain was expecting to collect about \$300 for the cancer telethon. Luckily the donations totaled a lot more.

The community ser-



From left: Josh Walper, Ciara Bannon, Jerry Gasser, Jordan Moose and Brian Harry prepare to make a donation live on TV to the ACS during the telethon on Saturday, February 23, 2013.

vice club ended up donating a total of \$1,000. They were \$138 short of

\$1,000, but Mrs. Cain helped the club raise the extra money to get to that

impressive amount. All funds raised were family and friend donations. The students who raise the most money were selected to present the check at the telethon.

The student council, advised by Ms. DeLucca, also contributed to this worthwhile cause. They presented a check for \$500. According to Ms. DeLucca, "Cancer is a world-wide cause and everyone is affected..."

Ciara Bannon feels it helps lots of families.

The donation was made with proceeds from the Victoria's sale.

Some Say Easter is Not Just for Candy

By Nisel Florentino
Junior Reporter

The Easter bunny is going to be hopping around here soon. Almost everyone has a sweet tooth and they are hoping for some candy! Seventh graders **Kasey Hernandez, Adriana Rodriguez, Nilson Florentino, Omar Diaz, Leslie Garcia,** and **Stephanie Florentino** all said they can't wait for the holiday candy.

Eighth graders **There-**

sa Schreffler and **Kelly Stoehrer** agreed, but Schreffler wants more.

"I want a new Barbie doll and chocolate marshmallows!" exclaimed Schreffler.

Leslie Garcia would like two little mini Drakes.

Omar Diaz would like some toys. It seems like these students think it is Christmas.

There are several students who mentioned family traditions at Easter time. One of the most common men-

tioned is the Easter egg hunt. Some people go all out and throw Easter parties and invite everyone they know. Yet there are others who do not celebrate the holiday at all.

But if you'd ask me, everyone is excited for the small break from school. This reporter would like a red convertible, a banana smoothie and a weave from the Bunny. Hoppy Easter!



SPORTS

Want To Be a Cheerleader?

By Vivian Ruiz and Gabriela Tomax*
Senior Reporter

After many practices, much hard work, lots of basketball games, and a few competitions, most of the girls from the Mounts cheerleading squad finally accomplished their dream. They've gone through a full year being a member of the HMS cheerleading squad. Most of the eighth grade girls are ready to try out for the high school squad. Plus, there are excited sixth or seventh grade girls who would be happy to take their spots. Seventh grade returning members will have to try out for HMS again too. No one's spot is guaranteed next year on the team.

We had a chance to speak with cheerleading coach, Mrs. O'Donnell to



find out some specific information about next year's team tryouts, which will occur in June.

Q: How many cheerleaders are leaving?

O'Donnell: There are 8 eighth graders leaving, but all the seventh graders must try out again for next year. Their spots are

not guaranteed to them.

Q: When are tryouts?

O'Donnell: Tryouts will be in June this year.

Q: How many girls will you be selecting?

O'Donnell: I can select a maximum of 20. I strongly suggest only those who are 100% committed to cheering for the entire year tryout because if new members quit in the

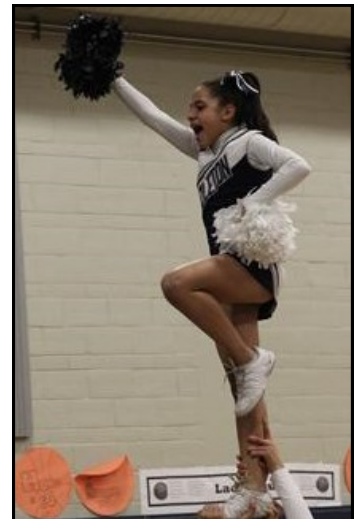
summer, as they always do for various reasons, I can't pick the next girl on the list. It doesn't work that way.

Also, you need to be here for the entire summer.

Many times girls don't realize how challenging cheerleading can be. My team works very hard and they WANT to come to practice, cheer at games, and compete. Talk to a cheerleader or come to a clinic and see what this sport is about.

Q: Will there be a clinic soon?

O'Donnell: The clinic will be in May. It is an



opportunity for everyone in grades 3 thru 8 to learn jumps, chants, cheers, and talk to the current squad members.

The cheerleaders did a great job this year and created a wonderful reputation for themselves. Whoever makes it next year has big shoes to fill.



CLUBS

Drama Club: Spring Play Nay or Yay?

By Leiry Rumaldo
Junior Reporter

Did you enjoy the drama club's play *Couch Potato Santa* in December? Would you want to see another play? Sadly, there won't be another play this year. Mrs. Dudeck and Mrs. Rimshaw, drama club advisors, both agreed there will be no spring play, but they do have other plans - A talent show!

The advisors are planning a talent show for students who want to show off their skills. The show will take place

sometime in May, due to PSSA testing. Students participating will have to sign a contract saying what they can and can't do. Groups of 3-5 (with exceptions) can participate.

I asked students who are in drama club how they feel about a talent show. **Vivian Ruiz**, eighth grade, said she is sad because, "I miss my drama club family." How sweet!

Eighth grader **Gabby To-max** said she's, "Sad because there's no play, but happy for

a talent show."

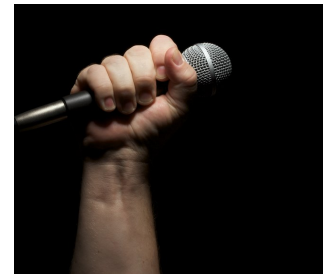
Margaret Fulton, eighth grade, is upset because she will miss drama club too.

Rebecca Schell, eighth grade, said she is sad because "this is my last year here."

Whether you agree or disagree with there not being a spring play, you can still come see the talent show and discover what hidden talents our school has. If you have a talent or you just want to show off your skills, participate in

the talent show. Even if you don't want to participate, show your support and watch your friends and classmates show how unique they can be.

Break a leg!



Valentine Dance - Better Late Than Never

By Yulimar Abreu and Jen Arias
Junior Reporters

This February love was in the air and there was great excitement before the Valentine's Dance. Unfortunately it was postponed until February 22nd, due to the wintery weather.

Even though it was postponed until after the holiday, the dance was still great and there were over 200 seventh and eighth graders in attendance. Everyone had a great time!

We were interested in finding out how the seventh graders enjoyed their first Valentine's Dance.

Seventh graders **Bra-yan Marte** and **Michael Mazur** enjoyed the

dance and can't wait until next year's.

Kasey Hernandez, seventh grade, thought it was ok. She liked the Harvest Dance better.

Others who attended the dance and had a great time are **Nicole Gutierrez**, **Cindy Jimenez**, and **Seidy Bobadilla**.



Seventh grade girls take time off from dancing with their friends to pose at the Valentine's Dance.



Seventh graders **Erika Castro**, **Stephanie Florentino**, and **Heilyn Lara** had a great time at this year's student council sponsored Valentine's Dance held in the cafeteria of the HEMS building on February 22, 2013.

Music for the dance was provided once again by DJ **Dante Mariano** from **Platinum Productions**, who does all our dances.

MOUNT'S CORNER CHAT

By: Rebecca Schell*

Senior Reporter

**Did you enjoy the many school delays
and cancellations this year?**

72% No 28% Yes

*Based on a poll taken of 100 HMS seventh and eighth grade students.

There have been many "snow" days this winter without there being any snow on the ground. The reason we have had so many days is due to the extremely old temperatures. Unfortunately, we already have 3 days from the fall when Hurricane Sandy hit. Now we have to add the snow days to those three days for a total of 6 school days to make up....IN JUNE!

After surveying 100 students at HEMS to see if they enjoyed all these

days off, we found that though some students and teachers did enjoy the days, most did not.

Jessica Cusatis, Nicole Ritz, and Danielle Hoffman, all seventh grade, said they did not like the snow days. They would rather have had school on the freezing cold days then have to take days off their summer vacation.

Seventh grade teacher **Mrs. Force** said she did not like the snow days either because now we

have to stay in school longer, and be in school when it is too hot outside.



Hudock

Eighth grade teacher **Mr. Hudock** agreed with Mrs.

Force saying he doesn't want to stay in school when it's too hot and uncomfortable out.

On the other hand, **Alexandra Miglas**, eighth grade, liked the snow days. She ran around in

the snow with her boyfriend and then warmed up with coffee and hot chocolate. You can't do that in the summer!

Kacie Johns, seventh grade, liked the snow days because we didn't have to come to school, of course!



Walper

Joshua Walper, eighth

grade, couldn't decide whether he liked the snow days or not. He said, "Both, because I like having the days off, but I don't want to make them up at the end of the year."

Unfortunately, you can't have it both ways, Josh! Whether you like it or not, we have to make the days up and we'll be in school until June 13th.

The Castle Caller Staff

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