



# The Paw Print

BCWMS

October 2015

## Extended School Day Creates Additional Learning

by HANNAH KRAGT

Even though you can only take one elective during the regular school day, you can take one of the after school classes or clubs that BCWMS offers.

The after school art class with Mrs. Campbell and jazz band with Mr. Klein are options, or you could join Dolce Singers and the musical with Mrs. Ryskamp, Science Olympiad with Mr. Dennett,

See **EXTEND**, pg.2



*Guest speaker Jeff Veley talks to students about how to overcome issues that involve bullying.  
Photo by Hannah Kragt & Isabelle McKinney*

## Be Nice with New WMS Program

by HANNAH KRAGT & ISABELLE MCKINNEY

In a perfect world everyone is nice and gets along with each other; however, in our world, some people are bullied, some have few friends, and some can be self-absorbed.

Through the Be Nice program students can learn to be nice.

The Be Nice program is led by Mrs. Stibitz and student-leaders that applied to be on the committee along with the

PAC (Principals' Advisory Committee).

The students involved are in charge of helping Mrs. Stibitz encourage and promote the program. Be Nice stands for: Notice, Invite, Challenge, and Empower.

Many people have put a lot of work into this program. BCWMS is not the first school to do this program.

See **NICE**, pg.2

### Inside this Issue

Student Life	3-4
Arts and Entertainment	5
Opinion	6
Sports	7-8

## News

### EXTEND, cont. pg. 1

Book to Film club with Mrs. Postma, or even Newspaper and Yearbook club.

Some think that these extras after school make students pick whether or not they can take part in a sport. That is false.

“I have practice after school. I can work after school art around my schedule. I go to after school art then go to practice,” said 8th grade student Avarie Kaiser.

After school learning allows students to try new things and master skills.

“I like plaster masks and clay. I like these because you can mold them into whatever you want,” says 7th grader Maddy Denning.

8th grader Auna Ruby enjoys playing solos and learning different styles of music.

Haley Schumann is in 8th grade and likes learning different ways to play an instrument.

Many people take part in these clubs because they enjoy what they do and can’t get enough of their craft.

Alex Locke simply stated, “It’s fun.”

This two-word phrase is simple but shows how jazz band not only furthers learning, but the enjoyment of a new experience.

So if you are looking for a place to further your interests and skills, check out one of the many options you have to enjoy art, music, experiments, and more.



*8th grade student, Cody Miller was picked from the crowd to help Jeff Veley show students how to overcome situations of bullying.*

*Photo by Hannah Kragt & Isabelle McKinney*

### NICE, cont. pg. 1

since 2011.

The focus is for students to look for ways they can be building each other up. Whether it’s a smile in the hallway or a complement of a person’s shirt, the Be Nice group will make someone’s bad day into a slightly better one.

Participating in this program will make our school a happier and more positive environment. Students around the school will be seen wearing shirts that promote the program.

Mrs. Stibitz said, “The Be Nice program is a bully prevention and mental health awareness program. At the core of Be Nice is the understanding that the way people are treated has an impact on their mental health (the way they think, act, and feel).”

This is the first time the Be Nice program has been at WMS.

“We want students to feel good about coming to school, we want to promote the best learning environment for kids, and most of all, we want them to feel safe. Be Nice is all about treating others with kindness and respect, reaching out to others in need, and stepping out of our comfort zones to do what is noble,” Mrs. Stibitz said.

Byron Center High School has been taking part in the program

## Student Life

The Paw Print  
STAFF

### EDITORS:

Tamara Blair  
Isabelle McKinney

### REPORTERS:

Jenna Ackermann  
Dez Anton  
Hannah Barney  
Caiden Bazuin  
Lily Bloye  
Emily Buijink  
Gaby Flandreau  
Eli Gaipa  
Schiah Hawkins  
Shyiah Hawkins  
Brynn Kaczkofsky  
Hannah Kragt  
Chloe Meengs  
Madelyn Rudolf  
Lindsey Selter  
Cari Steensma  
Ava Wheaton  
Charlotte Zeigler

If you would like to join  
Newspaper/Yearbook Club,  
contact Mrs. Campbell.

Share your opinion  
with us! Send it to  
our editors and you  
might see it in the  
next issue!

## Student Advice:

# Try Your Best

by CARI STEENSMA

Having fun in the sun, playing in the water, and tubing on the lake. These are all things that we love to do during the summer, but that all has to come to an end sometime.

I know that the first week of school is always the worst; waking up early and going from one classroom to the next for six hours to learn is not my favorite either. Plus, the older you are, the harder school gets.

This is where what you've learned before can come in handy. Remember Dr. Seuss? He once said, "Think left and right, think low and think high, oh, the things you think up if you only try."

If you just try at school, you will succeed. Your parents would rather have you fail and do your best than see you cheat and get 100%. It can be hard at times, but just hold your head high and keep going.

Even though the day feels like forever and the only real break you get is during lunch for 30 minutes, that doesn't mean that you don't have to try. Many say you get the grade that you worked for. Also, if you try, fail, and learn from your mistakes, success is surely in your future.

Even though we are at school, that doesn't mean the fun ends. At the beginning of the year there are fall sports like football, volleyball, soccer, and cross country. There is also Spirit Week and Homecoming to have fun with your friends and teachers.

In the winter, new sports seasons start like basketball and wrestling; additionally, there are nice breaks for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Some of the best moments to look forward to as the flurries fly include the random snow day, too.

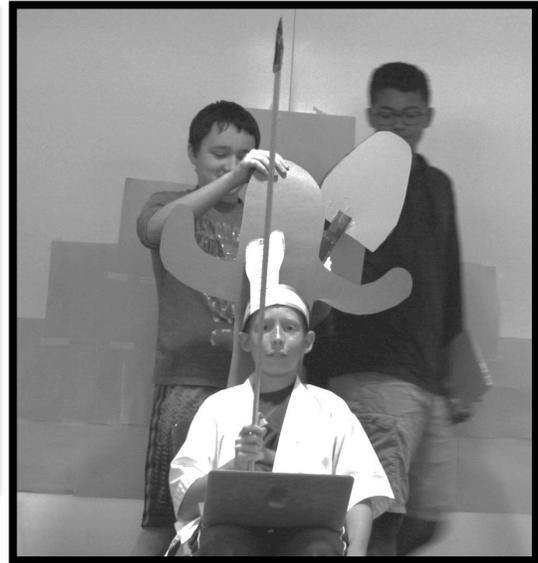
When spring rolls around, you have more sports to get involved with like Track. There are also more outdoor activities because the weather gets nicer. And don't forget about the end of the year celebrations for honoring students who have worked hard and done amazing things!

Before you know it, it will be summer again where you will be back at the beach. But before we get there, remember what Dr. Seuss said and try to make this year your best!

## Student Life



7th grade students performed skits in History to show what they learned about Ancient Egypt.  
Photo by Hannah Barney



## Teacher Feature: “Mr. G” stands for Geometry and Good Teaching

by HANNAH KRAGT & ISABELLE  
McKINNEY

Mr. Jeff Gdowski is the 7th grade Algebra teacher and also teaches Geometry to some 8th graders. He is one of the two math teachers that teach both 7th and 8th graders at BCWMS every day.

Mr. Gdowski started teaching ten years ago at Byron Center. He taught one year at Nickels, but he decided that he enjoyed working with middle school students more. Although Mr. Gdowski enjoys teaching both, Geometry might have an edge.

“Geometry is just a new way of thinking,” he said.

Mr. Gdowski has been all around the world, but his favorite place to travel is Egypt with his wife. He enjoys visiting Egypt because of the history.

Mr. Gdowski is also certified to teach History. This explains why he takes pleasure in traveling throughout the world.

He decided to become a teacher when

he was sophomore in high school. Since he enjoys Math most, that is what he decided to pursue.

He went to the University of Michigan. While attending U of M, he also played his trombone in the marching band.

Mr. Gdowski has some very exciting news; he and his wife are expecting twin girls that are due on January 31st.

He currently has a dog, Victor, who enjoys trapping squirrels in the gutter.

Mr. Gdowski is one of the hardest working teachers in Byron Center.

Not only that, but he excels at what he does, and is well respected by students and teachers at West Middle School.



Photo by Hannah Kragt

## Arts and Entertainment

## Book Review: Get Lost in *The Land of Stories*

by JENNA ACKERMAN  
*The Land of Stories*

*I*, by Chris Colfer, is a book about twins named Alex and Conner. They live in the western U.S with their mom.

It's near their birthday, and their grandma surprises them with a visit.

She ends up giving them her old storybook. During the next week, the twins find out the storybook is a portal that takes them to the "Land of Stories," a world where fairytales are real.

While they are there, they hear about a spell that can grant any wish; as they try to collect everything they need to activate it, the reader discovers the Evil Queen from the Snow White fairytale is trying to get the wishing spell, too.

The spell can only be used once more.

This is a great book for anyone that likes fantasy and adventure, and it will hold your attention. It may be a little bit boring at the beginning, but it turns out to be an amazing book.

The other books in this series are *The Land of Stories: The Enchantress*, *The Land of Stories: A Grimm Warning*, and *The Land Of Stories: Beyond the Kingdoms*.



## Sweet Spots for Treats

by HANNAH BARNEY  
HALLOWEEN!

It's amazing, and October focuses on the holiday. People dress in costumes, get candy, and has a great night -- but where do they Trick or Treat?

Some popular areas in Byron Center are:

- Planters Row
- Byron Lakes Estate
- Railside West
- And much more.

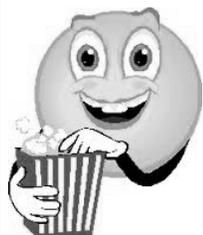
Indoor places include the following:

Woodland Mall  
Oct. 31, 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Below is a website with more information:

<http://woodtv.com/2014/10/23/halloween-trick-or-treat-times-in-west-michigan/>

### Soon in Theaters...



**November 6:**  
*The Peanuts Movie*,  
Rated G

**November 13:**  
*My All American*,  
Rated PG

**November 20:**  
*The Hunger Games:  
Mockingjay Part 2*,  
Rated PG-13

What new movies are you are interested in seeing?



## Opinion

# Take Advantage of Trick or Treating

by TAMARA BLAIR

Remember all those times you went out during a chilly, Halloween Night to go trick or treating? Remember the fun you had, and the candy you collected?

Halloween, with both the good moments and the bad, is a holiday that many look upon fondly – especially because of the trick or treating. Yet, a question lingers on the minds of many students: when is it time to stop? Should students still go trick or treating?

Yes, of course they should. Some students may believe that they are too mature for trick or treating and therefore should not do it, but

that is pure malarkey. If they enjoy collecting piles upon piles of candy, then that is what they should do.

Why let go of those fun times and give it all up? While it is true that there will come a time when it will have to end, that time does not have to be now.

Students should learn to embrace and enjoy their childhood while they still can. They'll regret it later if they don't, for childhood is a precious gem that cannot be obtained again once it is lost.

Making the most of one's younger days is not a sign of immaturity. Rather, it is a sign of immense wisdom. More people should learn to

be themselves and partake in what they enjoy. Instead of succumbing to peer pressure, students should gather the courage to do what they love and pursue what they want.

Trick or treating is but one of the few things that they may do to demonstrate their freedom from the control that people's views can have. Trick or treating is a part of childhood.

Trick or treating is fun times and stomach aches. Trick or treating is stocking up on free candy at night. Trick or treating is knocking on the doors of neighbors and even strangers. But, most of all, trick or treating is the future's valuable recollections.

# Computers Are Privilege to Take Seriously

by LINDSEY SELTER

Click. Tap. Space. That sound is a computer game. To teachers, it is an irritating and annoying sound.

So are computers helpful in class, or are they a distraction? Personally, I believe they are helpful only to the people who use them properly.

That's right, no gaming in class. It is wrong to be playing on your computer when your teacher is trying to help you get an education. They went to college to teach students like you. How do you repay them? By not paying attention?

While some students love their

computers to game on during class, others love their computers for studying and doing their homework.

If you like studying on your computer, good for you. You deserve to have your computer.

On the other hand, if you're gaming on your computer every day and not paying attention to the teacher, then you do not deserve your computer.

So, although computers may be helpful, they can be a distraction to others. I believe a student only deserves to have their computer if they have good grades and use their computer responsibly.

## Sports

### Students Run Towards Health and Fitness

by CHLOE MEENGs

The sport Cross Country is simple: it's like track except over different kinds of terrain. Up hills, through grass, or bolting down the parking lot, the team trains to run through all kinds of environments.

Cross Country, like most sports, is extremely good for your body. The uneven ground strengthens your ankles and feet, and if you run correctly, you'll develop strong calves and better hamstrings. Also, it keeps your heart pounding. Each race they run is around two miles.

This sport brings people together as a team to get a job done.

Emily Buijink, an 8th grade Cross Country runner,

says, "Cross Country is a team sport. Everyone is super supportive of each other on the Byron Center West Cross Country Team. Everyone thinks you have to be a good runner to be in Cross. In reality all you have to be is willing. If you are willing to participate in the stretches and the running you will get better whether you know it or not. This team doesn't care how fast you are. We are like a family."

This team also knows how to turn hard work into

winning results.

This year they placed 6<sup>th</sup> or higher in seven meets; the girls' team earning three first-place finishes.

Matthew Garbarino, a 7th grade Cross runner, says, "The easiest part about Cross Country is every Friday. We basically play games the whole practice!"

Overall, Cross Country is one of the toughest sports we have at WMS, and also one of the most healthy and fun.



Photo by Caiden Bazuin



### Soccer Snapshots



The 7th grade Soccer team works their hardest in a game against Hudsonville.

Photo by Cari Steensma

## Sports

### Volleyball Victories

by LILY BLOYE

The volleyball season comes to a close, and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade A team volleyball girls end the season with a 7-5-1 record.

Two players, Alexa Shier and Madelyn Crandel, shared their thoughts about the sport.

“Although the practices are long, they help us improve and get that much better for our upcoming games,” said Shier.

“The all-time

best part would have to be being on a team with all of your friends. We always get to hang out at practices and get to push each other to increase our skill set,” said Crandel.

“But the thing that we enjoy the most is getting to experience the adrenaline and energy that goes on during the games whenever we get a



*Photo by Lily Bloye*

good block or serve,” said both girls.

Even though the sport is over for the year, many of the

players will use their time away to prepare for the next season.



*Photo by Caiden Bazuin*

by CAIDEN BAZUIN

What do you think about when you hear football? Rough, tackle, first down, touchdown.

Austin Ottow, quarterback of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade orange team and outside linebacker said, “I want to

love to hit people, and it is really intense and competitive.”

Additionally, Braylon Baker, who plays middle linebacker and fullback for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade orange team, said, “I play football because I love contact sports and I love the

### Competing on the Football Field

play football for the school because it is just

what I love. I

competition.”

Joey Sturtz, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade wingback, said he plays because it is fun.

Mr. Dennett, one of the coaches, said, “The season is going well and the kids are playing hard. They are also learning a lot.”

Football occurs every fall and offers students a chance to compete through contact on the field.