

## A Fond Farewell to Mrs. Jarvis and Mr. Amitrano

**By: Allie Martin, Grade 6**

Last year, Mrs. Jarvis juggled, cartwheeled, and threw a softball better than half my class, including me. It's hard to believe that this lively fifth-grade teacher is retiring at the end of this year. "She's always very energetic, and she's an easy person to talk to." Says Mrs. Lajoie about her team teacher. "I've known Mrs. Jarvis all sixteen years I've been teaching here, and I like how supportive our relationship is for each other."

Mrs. Jarvis has taught not only students, but also teachers. She has taught the teachers to try new things. "She isn't afraid to try something new in her classroom, even if it doesn't go well." Says one teacher. She's taught people to teach about things that you care about and to have fun while teaching. She's a great role model for all teachers. "She is a very kind person who cares a lot about others." Says Mrs. Rutkowski.

Mrs. Rutkowski's favorite memories include Mrs. Jarvis jumping up to and

running to another room to get something that they needed. Mrs. Lajoie loved going on field trips with her, and Mr. MacMurray loved listening to her stories about her big family. "You can tell how much she loves her family by the stories she tells." He says. Mrs. Rutkowski will, "always remember how much she loves whipped cream."

Mr. MacMurray, who has been in the fifth grade with Mrs. Jarvis for five years, has more good things to say about Mrs. Jarvis. "She is friendly, fun and funny. She has a great sense of humor. She also seems to have a ton of energy, which is a great quality for a teacher to have!"

What will Mrs. Jarvis do when she retires? Well, for starters, she'll have more time to be with her family. Mrs. Lajoie says that "I think Mrs. Jarvis is happy but kind of sad about retirement." She also says that her fellow teacher will be filling her days with exercise, card games, and of course, lots of time with her family.

All of these teachers are sad to see Mrs. Jarvis go, but are the students? I know that I will be. I "strongly dislike" social studies (it's kind of boring) and always have, except for last year when I had her. I'm sort of "the smart kid", and I always was fast to finish and, as Mrs. Jarvis said, "keeping her on her toes". I remember one time, when I found a mistake in what Mrs. Jarvis was teaching us, pointed it out to the whole class, and then ran into the social studies classroom to show her, the whole class following me in hopes of earning a "Jarvis dollar". We got our "Jarvis dollars", along with a big smile, thank you, and lots of laughs from Mrs. Jarvis. She's a great teacher in that way too. She likes it when people find her mistakes and is always happy about it. One thing's for sure, this school will be a lot less energetic without her.

Mrs. Rutkowski says, "I wish Mrs. Jarvis all of the best in her retirement. She has put her whole heart into this job for a long time and she deserves to relax and enjoy her family now."

**By: Luke Venable, Grade 7  
Kate Watchmaker, Grade 7**

As many of you know, Mr. Amitrano is the band teacher for both the 7th and the 8th grade students. Over these last few years Mr. Amitrano has become a trusted friend to many of the students here. But now the time has come, and Mr. Amitrano is leaving our school. So today as we share with you this sorrowful news, we celebrate an amazing teacher, and we commemorate his greatest moments at our school.

Mr. Amitrano has been playing clarinet from a young age, and he later played many other instruments to an extraordinary level. Before coming to Miscoe he was a band teacher for seven years in Bellingham, and while he was in Bellingham he was working to getting his administrators license. When he came to Miscoe in 2011 there

was a job opening for a new assistant principal, which he occupied for a while, before he became band teacher. In becoming the assistant principal, Mr. Amitrano described to us that he originally had many goals for the school. "I wanted to be a leader in a school to help make sure the teachers were supported, make sure the kids are doing what they need to be doing, and help with things that go on, discipline issues, and just be a leader in the school essentially," Mr. Amitrano informed us. After four years of committing to this job, he decided that it was the time to get back into the music business and became the 7th and 8th grade band teacher.

As a kid, Mr. Amitrano always had a passion for music and loved to play the clarinet which he played all throughout his middle school, high school, and college years; while exceeding in



Central Districts and went to other festivals during the time. He went on for a music major in college, with a growing passion for teaching music.

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### Home of the Braves

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# Sports and Health

## Jumping into Gym!

By: Kayla Vallecillo, Grade 5

At Miscoe Hill, we have a great physical education, otherwise known as P.E. or gym program! From learning how to play basketball, to exercising, there are many great opportunities to stay strong and healthy!

I interviewed Mr. McInnis, who teaches 5th and 6th grade P.E. class. Mr. McInnis started teaching P.E. for the Mendon and Upton Regional School District in October of 1993. At the time, Miscoe Hill Middle School was Nipmuc Regional High School. I asked him why he started teaching P.E. and he said, "I have been passionate about sports my whole life and I've learned very special life lessons through athletics. I wanted to share these positive experiences with the kids of Mendon and Upton."

If you have taken gym, you may remember how Mr. McInnis gives nicknames to his students, which gives the class an additional touch of fun! The 5th and 6th grade P.E. program at Miscoe is comprised of team sports and fitness. Learning a new sport can be great fun, and maybe even create a path to a new career in the future. In addition, fitness can prevent a serious injury, make you feel younger, and make sports and everyday tasks easier. One of my favorite things about gym is that you can go at your own pace and no one will pressure you to work harder or faster.

I asked Mr. McInnis how P.E. made a connection to his life and he responded with "I believe that collaborate learning, striving to do your best, challenging yourself, handling adversity, setting goals, striving for excellence, teamwork, and many other important life lessons are learned in P.E. and athletics, and that's why I teach and coach the way I do!" Mr. McInnis has always loved teaching gym and hopes to share his experiences with his students. P.E. also helps students become healthier and more involved in athletics. I was interested in learning more about Mr. McInnis, so I asked him how health and athletics are important to him. He says, "I think they go together perfectly like a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. In many sports students can become much healthier because of the physical benefits and it also helps the social, emotional, mental, and intellectual frameworks of wellness!" Gym is a great way to meet new people and learn amazing things!

Gym is very fun, but how is it important to students? Mr. McInnis says, "I think it's very important for students to experience working together in a team atmosphere because they will collaborate in this manner throughout much of their life." It is very important for students to exercise and be healthy, but learning how to work together as a team is a great reason why gym is important for students!

Before we finished our interview, Mr. McInnis said, "I hope all kids in the Mendon and Upton school system take P.E. every year during their twelve years of school. I know it will prove to be beneficial throughout their time at Mendon and Upton, and more importantly throughout their life!"



Mr. McInnis having fun in gym!  
Photo by Kayla Vallecillo.

## Did You Read the Label?

By: Maggie Lewinsky, Grade 5

Did you know that eleven Nacho Cheese Dorito chips have 140 calories? That's something that almost all of us consume everyday. When you're snacking on chips or other snacks, do you ever look at the food label? Did you know that according to the fda.gov a higher proportion of men reported eating meat and certain types of poultry than women, whereas a higher proportion of women ate fruits and vegetables? Even if you are only having a few pieces of a snack it is important check the food label.

Mrs. Higgins teaches about food labels in wellness class, but why do we need to learn about them? When I asked Mrs. Higgins about it she said "I want kids to be able to know what things mean and what to look for. If you are trying to make a healthy choice, I want my students to be able to compare the labels and make the best choice for them." Before 5th grade I didn't know why food labels were important. Now that we were taught about them in wellness I understand them a lot more. I think that this is a great skill to teach middle schoolers because most of us probably didn't think that nutritional labels were of any importance.

It's beneficial to know what to have and not to have based on food labels. Mrs. Higgins told me that it's important to have protein in foods, because that's what helps your muscles grow, and people who are active should look for carbohydrates because they are good energy calories. You should watch out for fat, sugar, and sodium, because each of them can be bad for you, but only if you have too much of them.

Our lunches that our school provides never have nutritional facts attached to them because they're not in a box, but the school must

have them somewhere. I decided to email the director of food services in the Mendon Upton Regional School District. Her name is Mrs. Mucci. She said that you can go onto the school lunch website (on the Miscoe Hill website) and find the nutritional information for some of the foods served in our school lunches.

I was also wondering about how the school lunches get put together. Mrs. Mucci said that they follow the "Final Rule Meal Pattern", which most of the schools in America follow. In this meal pattern the school lunches have to have 9-10 oz of meat, 8-9 oz of grains, 3 ¼ cups vegetables, and 2 ½ cups of fruit a week.

For a healthy alternative snack Mrs. Higgins recommends frozen grapes, avocado toast, and apples with peanut butter. I think that what I have learned through this process is that it is very important to look at food labels, because you never know how much fat, sugar, or sodium can be in one serving of a snack.



Look at all of the artificial colors and flavors! Photo by Maggie Lewinsky.

# Coming Attractions

## What to Expect When Coming Into Fifth Grade: A Fourth Grader's Guide

By: Connor Gleason, Grade 5

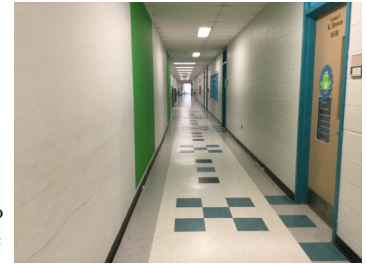
Fifth grade is a great experience, and the fifth graders and teachers I've interviewed would have to agree. However, sometimes it can be overwhelming. Almost everything is new, so it is hard to get used to. You're going to learn to be more independent by getting new responsibilities. One new responsibility is having your own iPad. You will be doing a lot of assignments on it.

When coming into fifth grade, some of the biggest things that could be overwhelming are the increased workload and the management of classes. Your teachers are preparing you for the fifth grade year, when you don't even know it. Getting more independence in fourth grade really helps prepare you for your next year in school. Another big difference between fourth and fifth grade, is you have the freedom of walking around on your own to all your classes. Most fifth graders really like how they can have a say in their electives. "I really like how I can have a say in my electives so I can take things I actually like," says Maggie Lewinsky. The fifth graders who do the band and chorus electives said they really enjoy it and it is giving them new opportunities. One of the hardest parts of fifth grade is adjusting with Mendon and Upton kids. It takes a while to

get used to. Make sure you're open to making new friends from both towns.

Some things a fourth grader should look forward to in fifth grade is Nature's Classroom. Most students love Nature's Classroom, and they like how they can learn with their classmates hands-on. Another thing you should look forward to is the projects in fifth grade. One of those being the Wax Museum Project. You get to learn all about a historical figure you are studying and you basically become that person for a day. Something else you should look forward to is the new enrichments at Miscoe. There are a lot of new opportunities to discover what you are interested in.

You should really look forward to your first year in middle school. It is fantastic and a new and great experience. Also, it is a great way to find new interests and to make new friends.



*One of the many fifth grade halls.  
Photo by Connor Gleason.*

## Homework: Horror or Help?

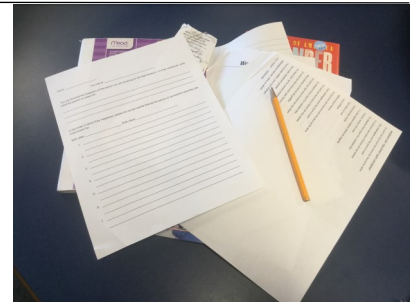
By: Naomi Singh, Grade 6

Homework. What exactly does it mean? Homework is usually work that you get from school to take home so you don't forget whatever it is you're doing in school. But what's the difference between a 5th graders homework and an 8th graders homework? And what do teachers think of homework? Does Google Classroom help teachers and students with schoolwork? Well, in this article you will find the answers to all those questions and more!

Homework usually depends on the teacher and the student. Sometimes a 5th grader will get more work than a 6th grader, but most of the time the higher the grade the more homework you get. Alexis Schwartzberg, a 6th grader, says that students should get homework, but not too much. Maggie Lewinsky, a 5th grader, agrees. "It's good practice outside of school," she added. Mr. Conant, an 8th grade teacher, says he gives his students homework about three times a week and it takes about 20 minutes each time to finish it. Mr. Conant also says that Google Classroom is very helpful. When asked whether or not kids should get homework, Mr. Conant replied with "I do think students need homework. It is a helpful tool for teachers to reinforce the material learned at school. It can also give students a preview of what will be learned the next day."

Sometimes the format of homework can also affect a child emotionally if

they can't understand it. Maybe electronic homework on an iPad is harder for you than homework on paper. Or it could be the other way around. iPad homework can sometimes be frustrating because your iPad might run out of juice. But sometimes written homework can be just as frustrating when you can't spell something or you run out of paper. Maybe a mix of written and iPad homework would be the easiest!



*So much homework? Is it needed?  
Photo by Naomi Singh.*

Students get homework to keep their memory fresh about the things they're learning in school. Teachers can also see what the student might need help with when they do work without a teachers assistance.

So what are your thoughts about homework? Should students receive work to do at home or should they only do work in school?

## CHOOSE YOUR ELECTIVES

It's that time of year again, students! It's time to pick your electives. You will get an email from the school before the last day. If not, wait, until it comes as a Google form.





# Past Events

## Behind The Party

By: Mina Megalaa ,Grade 5

The school socials are an amazing event that our school has done for a long time. I interviewed Mrs. Pike, one of the advisers of STUCO, for some information. I learned some interesting stuff and I think you will too.

According to Mrs. Pike the reason for why we have the socials is, "As you know Student Council organizes these socials as a way of raising funds for things, every year we focus our fundraising efforts on a specific thing and every single year is different. This year we are focusing on programs for substance using prevention for kids in our school, so kids won't be doing anything harmful to themselves. But it also started because it's a good way of bringing the community together and letting kids have fun." It's a good thing the money we are spending to have a good time is also being used to help people in need.

I always wondered where the idea for the socials came from but now I know. "I think that it's been something done in the history of schools for a long time now. And when I was in middle school I had school socials. Mrs. McCourt is the same thing. She is the other student council adviser. I think we just took the idea from past experiences and brought it to this school," said Mrs. Pike.

We have a certain amount of socials per year, what's the average? Mrs. Pike explained that, "Student council usually does two or three per year. There are other organizations who do socials as well so I think probably there ends up being six per year."

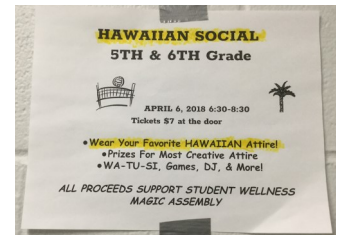
I wanted to know if Mrs. Pike was satisfied with the socials, and she told me, "Yeah, definitely, because it's a really fun way for kids to come together and money gets raised for a good cause every year."

When I went to the social I interviewed some more people as well. I asked Cate Flanagan, "How do you think the social went tonight?" She responded with, "It was chaotic and it was really fun and everyone was respectful and everyone had a great time." I asked the same question to Sydney Vanasse and she responded with, "Very successful, we raised a lot of money towards the yearly cause."

The school socials are a good way of raising money, letting kids have fun, and bringing the community together. It's a good thing our school has them. They are a fun, spectacular thing to experience and I think it's a good idea for you to go to one!



Riley and Bradley having fun!  
Photo by STUCO.



## Mrs. Arnold NEEDS YOUR HELP during the **SUMMER!**

Here's what you can do to help revamp the library:  
Add new books, create bulletin boards, organize the non-fiction area, and much more. If you are interested in improving the library, please email Mrs. Arnold at [karnold@mursd.org](mailto:karnold@mursd.org)



# Our School

## Keeping our School Clean

By: Sarah Martel, Grade 6

Our school can be messy, it's normal for schools to be like that. Areas can be dirty, such as the bathrooms, cafeteria, and near the lockers. Our janitors work hard daily to keep this school clean. Did you ever think what us students could do to help?

But teachers and the students of Miscoe Hill would prefer it to be more clean than dirty. Why should we keep our school clean? Lily Malloy, a 6th grader at Miscoe Hill Middle School said, "It's important to keep our school clean because it cuts down on children and teachers getting sick or hurt, and less work for the janitors who clean this school every day."

Why do students make a mess of the school? There are a lot of reasons. Some students may do it for attention, others may be trying to impress their friends, or maybe they're mad at the school for some reason. We can't really tell why students do it, because only the student who does it really knows why. I interviewed Mrs. Black, one of secretaries at Miscoe Hill, and she said, "I think students make a mess because they want attention, but often times students don't make messes intentionally, things happen without them knowing."

This school is mostly clean. Our janitors do work hard to clean up the school. Not every student wants to make the school dirty, or have something against the school. There are not many messes, but they do happen. Ever thought about how we could keep our school clean?

We can keep our school more clean by staying more organized. Sometimes you see papers all over the place, and it can be difficult to stay organized, but if you try, you can do it. Cody Jones, a student here at Miscoe Hill School said, "We can keep our school clean by trying to clean it up more. For instance if you see a snack bag on the floor, even though it is not yours, you could pick it up and throw it out." That's true, and if everyone pitches in to help you could keep this school clean. Instead of just watching teachers and janitors pick up garbage and throw it out, help them!

How do you think we could stop people from littering on school property? Couldn't we just pitch in when we see litter on the ground, and pick it up? If a student makes a mess on purpose and it disturbs the school day, the student should have a conversation with some teachers and receive a consequence.

But what should the consequence be? Well, they should help clean up the mess that they made. Or have a talk on why it is important to keep our school clean. All of these are ideas. I asked our school's Vice Principal, Mr. Marshall, and he said "The student should be cleaning up the mess. I think sometimes what happens people don't realize how their actions affect other people."

Our goal is we're trying to teach you how to become proper adults. People don't realize how they affect people. If the students do make a mess I think they should clean the mess, that they made with the janitors." It makes sense. But if all of our school tries, we can do it!

## The 7th Grade Speeches

By: Jacob Jiang, 5th grade

Every year, each seventh grader writes a speech on their own topic. They each choose a topic of their choice and write a persuasive speech giving their opinion. They then start learning about writing speeches around Martin Luther King Jr' day. The speeches are due after February vacation. "We start learning about speeches writing around Martin Luther King Day. We watch his speech as well as several others to model all the elements students are learning. Then we give students about three weeks to come up with a topic, conduct research on their claim, and compose the speech. We usually have students work on memorizing their speeches over February Vacation," says Mrs. Welch the seventh grade English teacher.

An example of a speech someone wrote about was how sport hunting is cruel. Someone also wrote about how mentoring is good, and someone wrote about how people with autism can still do things. Something else someone also wrote about was LGBTQ. Each speech needs to be three to five minutes long.

Everyone reads their speeches to their class and eight finalists are voted for to repeat it in front of the whole grade but they are allowed to decline. It can be hard for some people to give speeches because they are nervous to talk in front of other people. It has been done every March for the past six years including this year. The goal of the assignment is to help teach kids to write speeches and get better at public speaking.

Students also learn Aristotle's elements of persuasion, Pathos, Ethos, Kairos, and Logos to write their speech. Pathos is when you use your words to change the mood of the audience, Logos is the use of logic, Ethos is the use of words to gain the trust of the audience, and Kairos is the sense of urgency. Seventh grader Luke Venable says, "Each element of persuasion incorporates itself with emotion. For example, you could use pathos to make people feel sympathetic to your cause." When using all the elements your speech becomes very persuasive.

You can tell that the seventh grade speeches are very important and is something to look forward to in seventh grade!



*7th grade students who read their speeches to the whole grade.  
Photo by Mrs. Mannion.*



# Creative Corner & Performing Arts

## Miscoe Expo

**By: Rachatawan Greenwald, Grade 7**

As some of you might know, our school hosted something called an EXPO. The EXPO took place on Tuesday, April 10th at our very own school which started at 6:00 and ended at 8:00pm. Throughout the years, we've had nights where we came to school with our families and showed them what we have been doing in our electives. It was called M.E.S.S. and over time, Mr. Hansen and Mrs. Gentili have decided to 'rebrand' it and give it the name EXPO, which is sort of like an exposition or showcase for art. I interviewed Mr. Hansen, our 7th and 8th grade art teacher, and asked him a few questions about the big event. Mr. Hansen had mentioned that not only is this night for art, it's also a night for other electives like French, Spanish, Technology, Library/Media, Physical Education, and Wellness.

The main reason this whole EXPO came into being was because Mr. Hansen, Mrs. Gentili, and other elective teachers wanted parents to see what their children have been doing in their electives. Mr. Hansen and Mrs. Gentili have been hosting this event for about 10 years now. Showcases used to be held at the high school, but in 2008, when Mr. Hansen started working here, he moved the showcase with him and now it's being held at our school. Both teachers enjoy doing this because, "It showcases what our students do during the year," said Mr. Hansen. Sadly, not all pieces of art got put up for the showcase, but some lucky students did get their beautiful artwork put up for everyone to see. As families started arriving, they had walked through the 8th grade hallway where luminaries were lighting up the hallway. The first stop was through Mrs. Gentili's room, then out the side door to Mr. Hansen's classroom. As families went through each classroom, there were art displays all



*Custom made cereal boxes created by Mr. Hansen's 7th grade art class. Photo by Popia Greenwald.*

around the walls. Inside Mr. Hansen's room, were slideshows showing pieces of art. Mr. Hansen and Mrs. Gentili had a wonderful display of masterpieces all over their rooms. Board games were put out on a table near Mrs. Gentili's front door, and 3D sculptures near the back door. Mr. Hansen had gorgeous stippling pieces hung up on boards which were lining the walls in his classroom. On the tables, were ravishing cereal boxes which our students had created. The students made up their own types of cereal boxes and some students even had fun riddles on the back.

From downstairs, people walked into our school's library. The Miscoe Hill Expo was showing off some essays that were written by our 7th graders. Mrs. Arnold had essays that were written by some of our 7th grade students spread out on a table for display. Some of kids who are part of the Newspaper Club were also there to give parents a quick introduction to the school paper.

I noticed that Mrs. Keeler, the French and Spanish teacher, had family trees that our other 7th grade students made hung up on the walls. She was also playing some French songs like "Papoutai" and "Conmigo". Masks celebrating Mardi Gras made by our younger students were also shown in that room. Our wellness teacher, Mrs. Higgins, had healthy family meals food displays in the lower gymnasium. After seeing all those beautiful projects, my stomach started growling. Those posters sure were something. Last but absolutely not least, we have Mrs. Gervais who quite recklessly drove around the "Dash" robots. She also had an iPad set up to show parents what you can do with green screens. All in all, the EXPO was a ton of fun! Congratulations, once again, to all the students whose artwork was displayed, and great job to our inconceivable teachers for making this night a complete success.

## A Woodland Adventure

**By: Kaley Dirazonian, Grade 6**

Vibrant sunlight lapped at the earth, a bright amber coating to mask the death and decay of plants from the winter. An eerie calm gripped the land, silent and lifeless, yet the trees were whipped into motion by battering winds. The musty smell of rotting bracken drifted throughout the pine forest, and new dirt and stems barely sprouted up where the rotten leaves had been composted. Winter was harsh, but it was not the end, and aided in the beginning of new life. Thornbrush blocked my path, but I pushed it aside, and continued my trek up the hill.

I wouldn't say I had a purpose, or a goal, but the trip was worth it. Something about these woods simply mystified me, and drew me in in spite of its obvious dangers and flaws, including the vicious packs of coyotes, the numerous grizzly-bears, the foxes and badgers. This felt like home. I don't know where I was going, but I knew I was going somewhere, so I continued further. A stream lay in the distance, and beyond it lay a small clearing. I raced ahead, almost slipping into the water in my haste, and stopped in the clearing, heart pounding.

Why was I here, of all places? I would have left, yet something told me to remain a while longer, and I waited. Many minutes had passed once I heard a shrill voice. "Hello?" I called. I heard it again, this time louder. "Who are you?" I walked toward the noise, cautious of what I might find. "Hello?" I repeated. I heard the crunching of dried leaves heading in my direction, and the snapping of a twig. Then, it stopped. Now I could see two gleaming, wise emerald eyes, about my height,

peering through the shadows.

It looked at me, and I returned the gaze. We stood for a while, until the creature turned to lope away. "Wait!" I was running after it. Once I caught up, I could make out a slender, lizard-like body, with wings around the shoulders and two tall horns on its head. It stopped. Its light-blue scales gleamed, dappled with light that had escaped through the canopy of trees. When it faced me again, I could see its beakish snout, small, rounded ears, and two white eyebrows. It blinked, swiftly and firmly grabbed the hood of my jacket, and flapped its wings.

We began to rise into the air, and I struggled, but its grip would not cease. The collar of my jacket started to choke me. The dragon seemed to understand, lowering itself to perch upon a tree. It released me, almost sending me plummeting to the ground.

"What do you want?" I grumbled. Confusion clouded its gaze before it suddenly forced its head under my hand, as though it wanted attention. It leaped from its perch, landing gracefully on the damp forest floor. It looked over its shoulder, then continued forward. I carefully clambered down from the tree, gripping tightly to the branches so as not to fall.

Once I had reached the ground the dragon was bounding ahead of me. I followed, sprinting, until it halted just ahead of me. I could see its gaze focused on the mouth of a den, just below a fallen tree. It dipped inside, and I then I could see no more. I peered inside, but I couldn't locate the dragon; only an empty, cramped space.

**CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE**



**The Locked Diary – Part 3****By: Ishani Saha, Grade 6****Continued from the winter edition:**

Jesse spent the rest of the daylight hours gathering firewood and anticipating his visit to the woods that night. Firewood gathering takes a lot of time, which gave him many hours to think about what he would tell his father about the visit. Eventually he decided to tell him he was going camping. Which could end up being true. So, when the last rays of light touched the sky, Jesse was packed up and ready to go 'camping' with his best friend.

The entrance to the forest in his backyard was small; Jesse could barely fit through. As he walked through the forest, he smelled the familiar alpine that had been there ever since he could remember. The scent gave him pleasant memories.

Soon, he reached a clearing with many routes to and from it. The Fletcher family and a few close friends had used the campsite for so long, they joked that it had been there since the Stone Age. He sat on a log in the clearing with the letters "JAF" stenciled into it. They were his initials, and he'd tried to make a mark in the wood and succeeded.

Elijah had also tried, but failed. E and L were faintly imprinted too. As Jesse recounted this, Elijah trudged up the path from his house to the clearing. "Hey! You ready for an adventure?"

Jesse closed his eyes and took a deep breath, "Yes." He replied. Elijah gave him a quizzical look, wondering why in the world he was acting this way.

Jesse got up, stretching his legs a little bit before heading toward the trail that led out of civilization and into complete wilderness. The two boys walked straight past the noticeable line where maintained land met terrain. They had been there before, many times in the night, but none were as creepy as that night. It seemed as if small leaf creatures were following him, but he forced himself to believe it was a mouse.

But, Jesse and Elijah knew mice, and they did not follow humans like the 'leaf creature' was. They began to converse about the lump under the leaves. "I don't think that's normal, but if we

asked it to show itself, we'd probably end up like the CCGF." Said Elijah uncertainly.

"There's nobody here. If we were imagining things, we can just go back. We have the night." Jesse returned. Elijah made twisted his face to show he wasn't happy with it, but he knew that if Jesse could find a reason for something, he would do it.

"Fine." He puffed up his chest, and as loudly and deeply as he dared, he then called, "Little leaf creature! What are you doing?" Much to their surprise, a tiny humanoid creature with large eyes, scaly olive skin and a squeaky voice hopped out of the leaf pile. Elijah jumped, knocking Jesse down as he landed on him.

Weakened from Elijah's weight, Jesse ventured fearfully, "Who are you? I mean, what are you?" Trying to look as offended as possible, the humanoid announced, "I'm not a what! I'm an elf! And my name is Squeak! What's are far more boring than I!" Blinking confusedly at the elf named Squeaks' sudden outburst, the boys shakily started to get up.

"Ummmm, whatever you are, Squeak, we're just going to leave, okay?" This brought such a pitiful look to Squeak's face, not even a beggar could turn him away. "No! Please, before you go, break Night's curse! Also, don't call me a What!" Drawn in by the elf's entrancing face, Jesse mumbled, "Whatever, let's get this over with." Then, louder, he spoke to the elf. "Sure. What do we have to do?"

Squeak smiled, happy with his results, saying, "It's easy! Just feed me.... this leaf!" Rummaging through the leaf pile he was in earlier, he pulled out a bright red one. Elijah and Jesse grabbed the leaf and fed it to him. Immediately, when the leaf touched the elf's tongue, he dropped down, snoring. The boys snapped out of the elf's spell, regaining their senses and starting to run.

As Jesse and Elijah left the forest, another elf, hidden by the trees and wilderness, cast a spell on the pair to erase their memory. His spell was effective, and although they still have flashbacks to that odd night, if you asked them about it, they would tell you they have no idea what you're talking about. So closes the short adventures of Jesse and Elijah, who still have no idea what happened after they left the campsite that night.

**A Woodland Adventure****By: Kaley Dirazonian, Grade 6**

Should I follow? Before I knew it I was inside the den. I sat in wonder until, as I tried to stand up, and my head hit the top of the wall, I felt nothing solid. Of course, I was confused. Yet by now, on this strange expedition, I was becoming used to some warped reality. Many strange things had happened since I'd entered the woods today, so I suppose I just accepted it.

I walked forward -straight through the walls- to find an impatient dragon. It snorted, then moved forward. I couldn't see a thing but the dragon's luminescent eyes. Everything around me was dark, humid, cold. The floor beneath me was no longer the soft peat of forest, but stone. The dragon gave a huff, and a whirl of blue smoke and flames engulfed me. My vision faded, and I collapsed to the floor. "Welcome," The dragon towered above me. "We've been needing you for quite some time around here."

I opened my eyes, and pulled myself to my feet. I stood there groggily, taking in my surroundings. A warm ray of dawn flickered, lighting the particles of dust floating around in a large, hollow den. I looked to the opening, and outside it stood fields of lush light-green grasses, a bright cerulean sky full of winged creatures, and just a few feet away a crystal-line temple towering beyond the clouds.

**WWW.MURSD.ORG**

Our website has  
calenders, directories, and  
much more to  
see. Visit often.

## The Rise and Fall of Daisy Eyesocket

**By: Michael Byrne, Grade 6**

Long ago, there was a man named Daisy Eyesocket, nicknamed “The Eye”, who was most recognizable for his music career. He lived in sunny California, where he grew up and started his musical journey. I can’t really describe his music, but it was something that amazed the world. He became a big success in his early 20’s from his first album, *Treachery*, which made him a global phenomenon. He went on tours, talked on television networks about the success, made records with other very popular artists and soon released a follow-up album a year later, *Discovery*. He was on top of the world, but he would soon fall to rock bottom.

Daisy was declining. His sales had fallen, his tours were failing, and it didn’t help that the media had found videos of crazy things he was doing in his LA neighborhood, like stealing other neighbor’s property and setting trees on fire. These videos caught massive attention, and hurt his reputation in a way that he could never recover from. He became hated by millions, with many of them complaining that his “immature” actions would influence their children to do the same. A year later, after many complaints, he was cut from his original record label, Pacific Records, and fell into irrelevancy. He tried very hard to stay popular, even releasing a third album, *Victory*, but it sadly seemed that the Daisy era was coming to an end.

Daisy went insane, and the last known place he was seen was in the San Bernardino mountains, nearly 400 miles from his home in the sunny California coast. To this day no one has heard or seen Daisy since then, and he has been forgotten by many, lost in the sands of time. Maybe if you ask someone if they know who Daisy Eyesocket is, they may answer something other than, “No! Who are you? Get away from me” but other than that, no one seems to remember Daisy. As Daisy’s last request before he vanished, his albums were destroyed and buried in a patch of land in the middle of the Mojave Desert, along with the rest of his merchandise. Daisy Eyesocket was gone.

Daisy may have been forgotten, but he will still be remembered by some, including me.

## The Mysterious Benedict Society

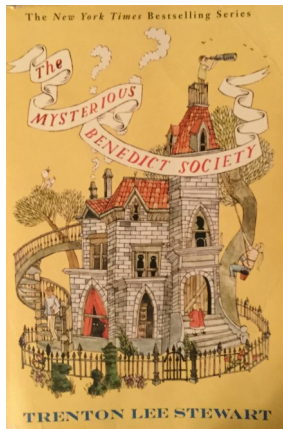
**By: Max Grisanti, Grade 5**

Are you looking for an amazing book to read? If so, you should read *The Mysterious Benedict Society*. This is a great series by Trenton Lee Stewart and was illustrated by Diana Sudyka. This is an amazing series about four gifted children, Reynie Muldoon, George “Sticky” Washington, Kate Wetherall, and Constance Contraire trying to save the world. These children all form the Mysterious Benedict Society, where they get to know Mr. Benedict and three other adults, a woman called Number Two, Rhonda Kazembe, who is only about 18 or 19, and Milligan, a man with no memory of his past. The kids learn that the world is in danger from a man named Mr. Curtain who is controlling people using evil messages. No one knows why, but they all agree that something bad will happen. They are then sent to investigate a place called L.I.V.E, the Learning Institute for the Very Enlightened, to hopefully ruin Mr. Curtain’s plans. Eventually, they do find out what Mr. Curtain is up to and stop him. Unfortunately, Mr. Curtain escapes leaving the door wide open.

In the second book, *The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Perilous Journey*, Mr. Benedict and Number Two disappear into the hands of none other than Mr. Curtain. Fortunately, Mr. Benedict leaves a trail of clues behind. The kids are determined to find Mr. Benedict and Number Two even if they have to take the fastest ship ever made to go to Portugal. They find out that Mr. Curtain has agents called “Ten

Men” working for him, and that they are close by. While they are in a hotel, two of Mr. Curtain’s agents break in to kill all four children. Luckily, Milligan finds them before they get killed and he shoots the two agents. Milligan tells them that Mr. Benedict and Number Two are on an island. They then travel to the island to save Number Two and Mr. Benedict. When they arrive, they find Number Two. Milligan goes out to search for Mr. Benedict and finds out where Mr. Curtain is keeping him. They then find Mr. Curtain’s cave, get Mr. Benedict, and leave the island.

In the third book, *The Mysterious Benedict Society and the Prisoner’s Dilemma*, all of the kids are not allowed to leave Mr. Benedict’s house. Meanwhile, Mr. Curtain is trying to find a brainwashing device called the Whisperer which is now in Mr. Benedict’s hands. Back at Mr. Benedict’s house, Constance runs away with everyone in the house chasing after her. This is the perfect distraction for Mr. Curtain to steal the Whisperer. The Mysterious Benedict Society soon find themselves on his trail. Mr. Curtain covers his tracks by leaving false clues behind. Of course, they don’t realize until it is too late. They run right into Mr. Curtain’s trap and get captured. Kate escapes but gets brought into a prison. She describes what she saw to the rest of the group and Reynie and Sticky find out that the prison is on an island. They plan another way to escape using Constance’s abilities. Constance manages to send a message to Mr. Benedict and tell him where they are. In the end, everyone comes to the rescue and defeats Mr. Curtain’s Ten Men and Mr. Curtain is sent to prison. Overall, this is an amazing series and you should definitely try it out if you haven’t read it yet.





## The Kane Chronicle

**By: Ishani Saha, Grade 6**

Books in the Series: *The Red Pyramid*, *The Throne Of Fire*, and *The Serpent's Shadow*

The Kane Chronicles is a trilogy about two powerful Egyptian magicians, written by Rick Riordan. Carter and Sadie Kane, the main characters, are descendants of two different Pharaohs. They are taken in by the House of Life after their father 'destroys', as they are told, the Rosetta Stone and vanishes. The siblings then enter a dangerous (and magical) world consisting of the Kanes, Egyptian gods, and the Rosetta Stone.

In the first book, *The Red Pyramid*, Carter and Sadie are suddenly thrust into a mixture of life threatening events, all of which are somehow tied into Set's (the god of chaos) plans. But, the House Of Life's hospitality came with consequences. Were they to be found hosting

gods/goddesses, they would be executed. (Hosting meaning harboring a god/goddess in their body.) Little did they know they were doing just that.

Even with all these difficulties, the young magicians survived, making it to the sequel: *The Throne Of Fire*. The pair and their recruits have made Set an ally in the larger fight against Apophis, a serpentine demon imprisoned in the Duat. The obstacles they face now are even more perilous than before, and the casualties are greater, as they embark on a quest through the Underworld to find the sun god Ra.

For an epic finale, the Kane siblings come back in the book *The Serpent's Shadow*. Apophis is wreaking havoc all over the world, and he's destroying the one thing that can destroy him: the Book of the Dead. The Kanes know he's planning a proper escape, but they don't know how or when.

This series is bound to keep you on the edge until the very end, with new characters and mythology in every plot twist. I hope you enjoy this story!



## Brian Selznick

**By: Sam Vinson, Grade 5**

Brian Selznick is the author of four popular books. One of them has a Caldecott medal and the book is called *The Invention Of Hugo Cabret*. His other three books do not have any medals and they are called, *The Marvels*, *Wonderstruck* and *The Houdini Box*. Brian Selznick has two houses, one of which is in Brookline, New York and the other is in San Francisco, California. Brian Selznick was born on July 13th 1966, meaning that he is 52 years old. He used to be a puppeteer and a set designer. His books have been translated into more than 35 different languages. *The Invention Of Hugo Cabret* has been created into a movie called *Hugo*. Which personally I thought was outstanding. But not as outstanding as the book. He should also write more books because he's a marvelous writer.

The first book out of the two that I've read by Brian Selznick was *The Invention Of Hugo Cabret* and I really liked it. I also read *The Marvels* which is just as outstanding as *The Invention Of Hugo Cabret*. We have three books by Brian Selznick in our school library. The books we have are: *The Marvels*, *Wonderstruck*, and *The Invention Of Hugo Cabret*. These are a few things Mr. MacMurray has said about *The Invention Of Hugo Cabret* and *Wonderstruck* "The only book written by Brian Selznick which I have read is *The Invention of Hugo Cabret*, which I really enjoyed." He also said that, "I actually heard about this book in a course in children's literature I was taking while earning my Master's Degree. I became very interested in reading

the book after hearing the professor describe it." He stated that, "Brian Selznick's writing style is very unique, as it is a mix of writing and illustrations, at least in this book. It differs from most other books with illustrations in that his illustrations move the story along, rather than showing parts of the story that are already written in words. I enjoyed this style of writing/illustrating and this book is very memorable as a result. His illustrations are very detailed and realistic as well." He added, "I would definitely recommend *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* to anyone." He continued, "I would love to read another Brian Selznick book. Some of my students have read *Wonderstruck*." I really hope you consider reading a Brian Selznick book there is a gigantic chance, you won't regret it.



Here are the three books by Brian Selznick that we have in the library. Photo by Sam Vinson.

# Alice in Wonderland

## Alice in Wonderland—Behind the Scenes

By: Brian Dubowik, Grade 7

You may have seen Miscoe Hill Youth Theater's production of *Alice in Wonderland*... or not. Whether or not you attended, here's some information about the show.

### Plot

For those of you who didn't go to the performance or haven't seen the movie, *Alice in Wonderland*, is the story of Alice's journey through Wonderland, which is a magical land filled with talking rabbits, singing flowers, a bunch of soldier-like cards, and some weird food. Along the way, she meets lots of zany, wild characters such as the Mad Hatter, an insane guy who wears a big hat and breaks things for fun, and the White Rabbit, a talking bunny who spends a while talking about how he is late. She also meets the Girls of the Golden Afternoon, a bunch of flowers who act like they're better than everyone else, and the Queen of Hearts, a monarch who is in charge of an army of cards and likes to cut people's heads off. At the beginning of the show, Alice is very excited to venture through this place, but by the end, she is confused by all the chaos and wants to find her way home, especially since the Queen of Hearts wants to cut Alice's head off.



### The Production/ Rehearsals

The play was directed by Mrs. Appleby, and auditions took place early in the school year. The play was rehearsed from early February to early May. The actors rehearse for a total of about 6 hours and 45 minutes a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. The first part of each rehearsal is spent working on songs. After that, the cast runs through the play before cleaning up so they can go home after spending eight hours at the school.

### The Stage Crew

None of the performance would have been possible without the stage crew. The stage crew does all of the behind the scenes work for each production. There are people who handle the props, people who control the lights, and people who control the curtain and set changes. Josh Crosby, who I interviewed, is the stage manager, so he has to make sure the stage crew knows what they are doing, call the actors onstage, and assist the director. When I asked Josh what the hardest part of being on stage crew is, he replied, "Remembering cues of when to switch sets, change the lights, close and open the curtain, and for me knowing when to cue the cast." According to Josh, the stage crew rarely makes mistakes, but occasionally a prop will go missing or they will have to fix something, but they always figure it out.

### Fun Facts

The play had about 60 people in the cast, but there are only about 20 speaking parts. There is a lot of music, as the script has about 55 pages worth of music, which is more than half the play. The performances were on May 11 and 12.

If you are interested in joining theater, auditions usually take place in early September. If you went to the performance, I hope you enjoyed it!

## FIELD DAY



Every year we have a day dedicated to team work, being healthy, and outside.

**The dates for field day are:**

**5th grade 6/20**

**6th grade 6/19**

**7th grade 6/22**

**8th grade 6/21**

We are looking for people to volunteer to help make this day possible. GO Miscoe!

# D.I.Y.

## How to make Easy Tie-Dye Cupcakes

By: Allie Martin, Grade 6

### -Ingredients-

1 box white cake mix (normal size)  
1 1/2 cups Lemon-lime soda or Sprite  
(alternative for milk, eggs, and oil)  
A jar of your favorite frosting  
Different food colorings

### -Materials Needed-

Baking tin for 24 cupcakes  
A measuring cup  
An electric mixer  
Lots of bowls  
Toothpicks

### -Step One-

Get your ingredients ready and preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

### -Step Two-

Mix the cake mix with 1 1/2 cups of lemon-lime soda, with the mixer on low for 30 seconds, then on medium for a minute.

### -Step Three-

Divide the mix into bowls, as many as you have food colorings.

### -Step Four-

Add a few drops of the colors into each bowl (one color per bowl) before spooning into the baking pan until 3/4 full. You do this by putting it in halves, thirds, fourths, or fifths, depending on how many colors you have. Then take a toothpick and stir it around, trying not to mix the colors but instead just swirl them around, so that they look tie-dyed.

### -Step Five-

Bake for 18-20 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

### -Step Six-

Leave in the pan to cool for 10 minutes, and then take out and set on a wire rack to finish cooling.

### -Step Seven-

Frost and enjoy!




**Yummy cupcakes ready for the oven.**  
**Photo by Allie Martin.**


## Farewell Mr. Amitrano– continued from page 1

Mr. Amitrano told us, “I made All State every year while I was in 7th grade all the way to high school in 7th grade, because I lived in Rhode Island and so we just had All State and I knew in high school that wanted to go into teaching and I wanted music be a part of my life, and I wanted to do music teaching and teach band, so that was my major in college and I loved it. I always loved teaching music and have it be a part of my life playing in churches and playing in music with Mrs. Amitrano has always been a fun thing to do.”

For the past year or so, Mr. Amitrano has been in the real-estate area, which he is planning to pursue full time once he leaves the school. This job will be a nice refresher for Mr. Amitrano and he will be leaving this school with good memories. As he leaves the school we all give our best wishes to him and he won't be forgotten.

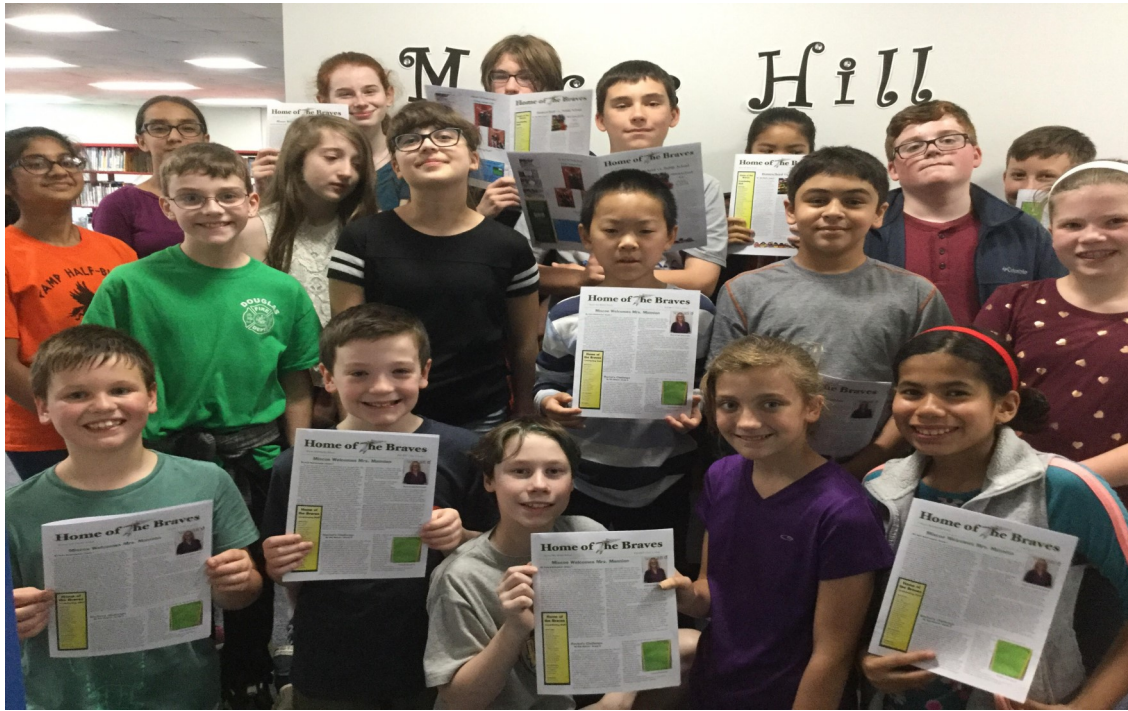


# Summer Reading



During the summer, you have to get your summer reading done, this can be a hassle. But, the reading is just to help you with the next year! Look at your grades for the link to the books. Don't forget to get your summer reading books at your local library, and participate in the summer reading programs!





Thanks for reading the *Home of the Braves*! See you in the fall.

## Home of the Braves

Check out Home of  
The Braves on the  
Miscoe Hill website!

<http://miscoehillschoollibrary.weebly.com/home-of-the-braves-newspaper.html>



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Questions or comments?  
Contact us! [karnold@mursd.org](mailto:karnold@mursd.org)

**Want to be part  
of our staff?**

An email will be sent with information about our next issue.



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