

# Home of the Braves

Miscoe Hill Middle School

Spring 2016 | Vol. 1, Issue 3

## Miscoe Market

**By: Elisabeth Gronda**

The Miscoe Market has a lot of fun items like pencils, sharpeners, pens, little airplanes, erasers, bracelets, and more. Mrs. Ishler and Mrs. Milton say they have a fun time because they are getting their students involved. They started the Miscoe Market because their students are learning about money and wanted them to try a real life situation with money.



Students working at the Miscoe Market.  
Contributed photo

That's what inspired them to create the Miscoe Market. Now they are hoping to expand the Market by selling things such as T-shirts and other items. The prices are between .25 cents and \$2. You can only shop at the Miscoe Market during 7th and 8th grade snack and 5th and 6th grade lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Go check it out! They look forward to seeing you there.

## Home of the Braves

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### Want to be part of our staff?

An email will be sent with information about our next issue.  
*Be on the lookout!*

## Buzz Cuts for Kids

**By: Sarah Flynn**

Cancer. It affects millions of kids and is closer to home than you think. There are tons of organizations out there and Miscoe is giving you a chance to help. The One Mission Buzz Off is an organization to help people with cancer. On June 20th, eight barbers will come to Miscoe Hill Middle School to shave willing participants, including students, teachers, and employees' heads, to help kids with cancer.

Shaving your head for the One Mission Buzz Cuts For Kids program provides money to help with activities for the kids while in the hospital during their treatments and money for research. Kids are usually in the hospital for extended amounts of time and even a little something can make their day a special one. Having your head shaved to help kids only costs \$10.

People who decide to shave their heads need sponsors. Anyone can donate money to the organization to sponsor that person.

Some people may be terrified to have their head shaved but that's ok! It's your choice if you would like to do it or not! If you still want to help raise money, but you don't want to shave your head, you can always help sponsor another teacher or student. If you sponsor someone and you are the first to sponsor that person you get the honor of shaving the first strip of their hair. You will always feel good no matter how you decide to help.

I asked Mr. McInnis about what sparked the idea of Buzz Cuts For Kids and he told me Miscoe started a program called "Miscoe Friends Of Rachel's Club," which is all about random acts of kindness. Mr. McInnis told me he has shaved his head for the

organization before and it felt good to help a child in need. He also told me the kids who participated can go to a cookout at lunchtime.

To make the event even more exciting, Mr. Marshall will be having his head shaved, too, and Miscoe will be sponsoring him! He also said if Miscoe raises over \$100, he will dye his hair GREEN before his hair gets shaved! So, let's start donating!

Kids with cancer need your help so sign up or be a sponsor! Helping someone in need will feel great, and the dollars you raise will make a difference for kids with cancer.



# Miscoe Highlights

## Literacy Night: Behind the Books

By: Alison Beaupre



Volunteers from National Junior Honor Society.  
Contributed photo

Recently the Mendon Upton Regional School District held a district wide event called Family Literacy Night. Family Literacy Night took place in Nipmuc Regional High school on March 31, 2016 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. This event

was organized by the school library teachers of the district: Ms. Arnold—Miscoe, Mrs. Gale—Memorial, Mrs. Trimble—Clough, Mrs. Venkataraman—Nipmuc, and Mrs. Roecker—Nipmuc. This was the first Family Literacy Night that took place in the whole district. I sat down with 6th grader, Carly O'Connell, and she told me that there were several rooms containing books and activities. For example, there was a room about mythology.



I Love Mythology Room.  
Contributed photo

"And in another room, they had an activity where you could grow a sunflower, inspired by Eric Carle's book *The Tiny Seed*" said Carly. When you walked into the building, you received a passport. Then at the end of the night, you could turn in your passport to enter a raffle. The prizes they raffled off were three Barnes and Noble gift cards. All in all, Family Literacy Night was a big success, as there were smiles on many people's faces as they left for the night. Family Literacy night will be an annual event, so if you missed it this year, you can attend next year. Bring your friends and come enjoy a night of reading, fun and learning.!

## Peter Pan: Behind the Curtain

By: Delaney Mortimer

Peter Pan was a success, and lots of people enjoyed it, but have you ever wondered what it was like to be in the play? On my first year in the drama program it was hard to remember when to go on stage, especially in the musicals when you have to remember at least 6 different songs!

This year is my second year in the program, and I was happy that I got a slightly bigger role.

And when I was in the musical I got my very own solo song as a mermaid!

But enough about the parts, what really matters is how you play them. I am disappointed that the 8th graders will not be here to perform, they have been here for four years.

Everyone in the play is required to attend rehearsals until 5 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It was a lot of work having to go until 5 p.m. and then do homework after, but the work pays off in the end when you get to perform and act on stage! Some people think that every year you get a bigger role, this is partially true. They generally try to give larger roles to the 8th graders but sometimes can't. It really matters how hard you try at auditions.



Walk on June 10th for JDRF  
At the track field during last block



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# Miscoe Highlights

## Robotics Club

By: Brian Dubowik

Ever since 2007, once a week, the Miscoe Hill Robotics club gathers to build and program robots. But how do they do this, and what is the robotics club?

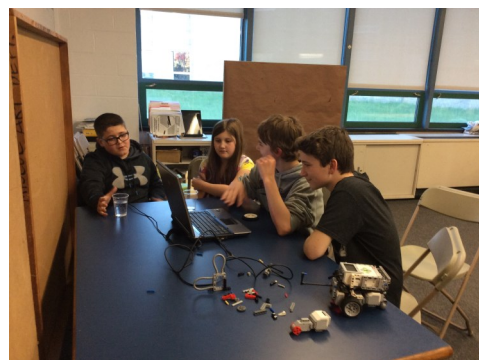
The robots are built out of Legos. You're probably thinking, Legos are just motionless bricks. How do they turn into moving, working robots? Well, these robots are built using Lego Mindstorms sets. One of the most important parts is the "brain" where all the programs are stored. When I asked the robotics coach, Mr. Taylor, what he thought the most important part was, he said, "I think the student is the most important part."

There is also the motor, which turns the wheels, and the sensors, which can cause robots to stop when it hits a wall, stay on a color, or even sense where a

pile of bricks is before it bumps into it!

At the beginning of your time in the club, you have to build the robot. "Once a robot is built, you want it to do simple tasks first, like make it move and turn," said Mr. Taylor. You build in teams, and once June comes around, the club takes a break. In the fall, it resumes, and in November, there is a competition where you go to BVT and compete with other towns. When I asked coach what Miscoe's scores were last year, he said good things about each team. "Platypuffs got the third place champion's award, Turtle Rebellion got the second place teamwork award, and Robo Rabbits got the first place innovative solution award."

During the competition, the robots must complete tasks. "The most common task is to pick up a loop and



One of the small groups working on their robot. Photo by Brian Dubowik

return it to base." said Mr. Taylor. Different challenges give different points.

The robotics club is a fun experience that I think a lot of students, especially students who like programming or Legos, should try.

## National Junior Honor Society

By: Megan Fallon

If you are wondering what the National Junior Honor Society, or the NJHS is, I interviewed the experts: Mr. Labarre, Mrs. Morrison, and Chloe, a student in the society. Here is what the teachers said:

### 1. What is the NJHS?

The NJHS is an organization that recognizes outstanding middle school students. Students in NJHS generally reflect excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, character and citizenship.

### 2. What made you start this program?

We wanted to honor middle school students who represent what we want all

Miscoe Hill Students to be. Along with being a hard worker and achieving good grades, we also want to award students who are all-around nice people and are highly motivated.

### 3. What do you expect from the students?

Students are asked to submit an initial letter and state why they want to be a part of the National Junior Honor Society. After that, they must attend monthly meetings before school as well as complete five hours of community service based towards helping in the Mendon-Upton School District.

### 4. What is your favorite part of the honor society?

We really enjoy seeing the students become excited about their community service hours and helping to

make Miscoe Hill a better place! We've had students help out at events such as school socials and the first ever Mendon-Upton Literacy night. Watching these students spend their own time to give back to the community is really a pleasure to see!

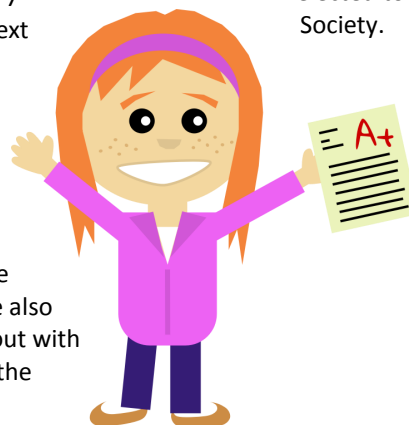
### 5. Are you excited for the 7<sup>th</sup> graders?

Yes we are! We still need to finalize the details, and look forward to adding 7<sup>th</sup> graders to NJHS next year.

My sister Chloe Fallon is an NJHS member. Chloe says she enjoyed the community service opportunities. She also enjoyed hanging out with people who have the same interests. Chloe would like

to see all of the grades participate in the NJHS. But since it's not offered to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders, she encourages all 7<sup>th</sup> graders to strive to get in. Being in the National Junior Honor Society helps you better prepare for high school and also because helping out with the community can earn you college credits.

Good luck! Study hard and maybe you, too, will get elected to the Society.





# What's in My Miscoe Future

## What to Expect in 8th Grade

By: Chloe Fallon

Many seventh, sixth, and even fifth graders worry about entering eighth grade. As an eighth grader myself I can safely say that I wish I knew more about the system and what to expect. For instance I wish that I had known how to study properly. In seventh grade I never had to study for hours on end for each test. Incoming eighth graders should find an hour every day to go over work and make sure that they are caught up. Being organized is crucial; disorganization can lead to turning things in late. An organized room, school bag, and folder can be the difference between a good grade and a bad grade.

Incoming eighth graders should also prepare for a harder curriculum and less time given to complete projects and assignments. While these tips may seem obvious, actually following through on organizing your things can be very hard. In eighth grade you also have to work with people who you may not like or who share different opinions on whatever topic you are studying. There is also significantly more homework and overall effort that needs to be applied to work. However you must apply effort to new parts of work, for example eighth grade teachers are much more strict when it comes to accurate projects and homework and making sure your work is original and creative.

While eighth grade may seem much harder and more stressful, as long as you keep yourself in check and get all your work done it can be slightly less overwhelming. As long as you work hard and keep an eye on your grades you can enjoy the fun parts of eighth grade. There are some great field trips like going to Six Flags and hiking up Mt. Wachusett. You also have the Renaissance Faire and the Engineering Fair. At the end of the year, you have Semi Formal.

Eighth grade is much harder than seventh grade, but you also get much more independence than any other grades. Classes like project block allow students to freely work on homework and projects. So to those who worry about eighth grade, don't worry! Simply stay organized and keep up with the work and you'll be fine.

## 7th Grade Coming Attractions

By: Jenna Meleedy and Kirsten Dinsmore

This is an article for anyone who doesn't have an older sibling or someone willing to help you out when you get to seventh grade. When I first moved up from sixth grade, I wished I had some sort of list or at least an idea of what to expect. But since I didn't have an older sibling to tell me I had to learn the hard way how to squeeze everything inside of my locker so I wouldn't have to interrupt a class to get someone to help me pry it open. (It took two teachers and an iron foot to kick it open). So here's some insight on the life of a seventh grader. You're welcome.

### Honors Classes

If you have good enough grades by the end of sixth grade, you could be in an honors class. Honors is for seventh and eighth grade only. Because of the way the schedule works, you can be in one, two, or four honors classes. The work is more challenging and you get more homework, but hey, you get bragging rights. Not to mention you want to be in honors if you're going to BVT and you may get a medal at the eighth grade ceremonies. How it works is they take about 20 to 25 students (a regular class size) on a team with the top grades in a specific subject and those students become the honors class.

### What We Don't Have

There's a rumor out there that seventh and eighth grade don't have recess, and that's completely false. We actually just don't have the playground. We're allowed to go around the mulch and sit at the benches and tables, run around on that grassy area next to the playground, and go on the basketball court next to the grass. We used to be able to bring balls out onto the

blacktop, but too many ended up going over the fence, so now we can't bring them out. If you ever get that chance, please don't make the same mistake. As of today we don't have Mandarin or Media classes but they may expand those to seventh and eighth grade later. We also don't have DEAR time and reward time, but we do have project block and break. Sometimes we get to go out during project block, so it's kind of like reward time...

### Break

We may not have the playground, reward time, or DEAR time, but we do have break. Break is a time after first period when you take your snack and head to the cafeteria for about ten to fifteen minutes. You can bring anything nonelectronic and I found it to be a great time to study for all the quizzes I forgot about. It's also a great time to catch up with some of your friends that are on the other team. Don't take this time for granted, because it's nice to have a quick break during the day.

### Split Block

Split block is something that takes some getting used to. It's the fourth block of the day and one of the longer classes, and it's like having your class cut in half and taking a break for lunch and recess for about 30 minutes and then going back to whatever you were working on.

### Central Districts

Central Districts is when Mr. Ferrari picks a couple of students that audition to get a chance to sing with a very exclusive chorus group for all of Massachusetts. It's a lot like All State Treble Chorus. Mr. Ferrari will talk to you about this if you're interested.

# What's in My Miscoe Future

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## 6th Grade Terrarium Project

By: Carly O'Connell

### Introduction

This year my Science teacher Mrs. Lambert said that we were going to make a terrarium and I was very excited. A terrarium is a kind of like a mini garden in a fish tank. How you do this is you fill up the fish tank with soil, gravel, and plants but, you don't water it!

### How it Works

You are probably wondering how the plants stay alive without watering them. You seal the terrarium and put it near a window so moisture in the tank rises to the top of the tank. Since the tank is sealed the water stays put at the top as water droplets. Eventually, the droplets fall like rain and water the plants. This keeps going on and on again.

### Do Your Part

One of the fun parts of this project is bringing in things to put in the terrarium. You can buy plants to put in the terrarium or if you like to be creative you can just dig up plants in your yard and put them in the terrarium that way. You don't have to make



Photo by Carly O'Connell

your parents drive to the store to get a flower instead you can get it from your yard.

### Conclusion

Making terrariums isn't just a fun school project, you can do this anytime. Just get a jar and fill it with soil then put a plant or two in there now close the jar tightly and place the jar near a window and watch it grow!

## Call for PTO Members

The Miscoe Hill PTO is looking for new members and general Members! Spots are open for the 2016-2017 Miscoe PTO.

General membership is always available for \$5.

Meetings are one night a month so join us! Share ideas, tell your friends, And help continue to make Miscoe a great place for our kids!

# Interviews

## Life of a Substitute Teacher

By: Luke Venable

Have you ever wondered what it might be like to be a sub? To never know who you were going to teach or when you would do it until the last minute? Well I interviewed Mrs. Venable and Mr. Iadarola (Mr. I) to find out the answers to these questions.

Mrs. Venable responded this way when I asked her when she was informed about who she would sub for. "It all depends. Sometimes a sub gets a phone call the night before the day they are needed. Sometimes the phone rings early in the morning, asking if I can come in the same day that I am needed. Other times a substitute might be asked to come in a few days before," she said. Mr. I responded similarly, "Either the night before or the morning of. And in some cases if we know what teacher is going to be out they can let me know earlier." In response to my next question, what is it like to teach different kids every day, Mrs. Venable said, "It is exciting to have the chance to work with different groups of students each day. It keeps me on my toes because each day is totally different than the day before." Mr. I, once again has similar thoughts. "It's good

because it allows me to meet kids at all different age levels and educational levels. And it's always something different."

I learned that Mrs. Venable just started subbing this spring and Mr. I has been subbing for about six months. Mrs. Venable, when asked why she decided to become a sub, replied, "I really enjoy explaining things to young people. It's very rewarding to see the look in a student's eyes when they understand something for the first time. Often, students just need a little encouragement to try something. I want to be the one to cheer them on, to tell them that I believe in them. Learning is all about taking chances, trying to solve a problem one way and then if it doesn't work, figuring out a different way to approach it." Mr. I enjoys working in a school system to explore different areas of education and because he likes kids.

Both subs agree that one day they would like to become full time teachers. Mrs. Venable said that 16 years ago she taught in N.Y. but chose to stop teaching when she had children. Neither one of them currently subs at any school besides Miscoe.

## First Year Analysis

By: Jack Watchmaker

Mr. Brinker is a 6th grade Math and Science teacher. He can also teach grades up to 12th. This is his first year of not being a substitute teacher in middle school, before he was a technology substitute. Mr. Brinker is also a teacher who tries different approaches to teaching. For example "Kahoot." It is a website where you compete with other students and try to get first place.

I had asked the 6th grade teacher, Mr. Brinker about how his first year of teaching 6th grade went. Mr. Brinker had said that it was different every day. What I had got out of that, is that Mr. Brinker thought there were good days and some bad. Which is understandable or at least in my opinion. I asked Mr. Brinker why he likes teaching. He said that he likes how he gets to teach kids how to learn and try new things.



## 2016 Senior Walk



Nipmuc 2016 seniors walk through Miscoe Hill one last time. We wish them good luck in their future. Photo by Ms. Arnold



Miscoe Hill students wishing the outgoing 2016 senior class good bye and good luck. Photo by Mrs. Cohen



# Miscoe Arts

## Acapocalypse Invading

By: Kirsten Dinsmore and Delaney Mortimer



Miscoe Hill's Acapella group, Acapocalypse, is working on four songs; *Photograph*, *Here*, *Drag Me Down*, and their newest song *Wide Awake*. They just performed at an event called the POPS. This event took place at Nipmuc High School. It was a huge success! We hope to see continued support from the school in years to come.

## Putting on a Play: What does it Take?

By: Kate Watchmaker

Have you ever wanted to know what goes on backstage during a play? Are you interested in being an actor or in working backstage? Well, here's your chance to hear what the experience is like, and how to join! I have interviewed three people in the backstage crew: Maryn Shilale, Paige Allen, and Natalie Kurze. Some of the jobs were prop master, set change, lights, and curtain. If you're interested in helping backstage and getting in on the action, go talk to

Mr. Rogers. It doesn't matter what grade you're in. Some skills you must have are the ability to be "focused and be quiet," according to Maryn Shilale. As Paige Allen, the stage manager, said, "There was a bunch of small details that sometimes happened last minute." They said that backstage can be a bit hectic, but everything comes together in the end. When you first get your job, it can get a little confusing, but Natalie Kurze says that you eventually get the hang of it! During rehearsals it seems a bit chaotic, but when the curtains go up it all comes together. I definitely recommend being backstage!

Madison Orff and Delaney Mortimer, both actors from the Peter Pan play, say teamwork between all of the participants was both good and bad. To get into the play you go to the auditorium after school and audition by reading one or two monologues.

Madison and Delaney recommend drama and plays to, "people who believe they have talent and want to get themselves out there." After speaking to Madison and Delaney I learned that if you have little experience with acting, it can get hectic and you may get confused, but everyone needs to start somewhere.

# Sports

## Track and Field Team

By Mrs. Ann Meyers

The Miscoe Hill Track & Field Team had a highly successful season under the coaching of Mrs. Pike and Mrs. McCourt this season. Their last meet was Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at Fitchburg University. Students had to qualify to compete at this state level meet. The following students competed at the state meet in the events listed after their names. We are very proud of these students that are representing Miscoe Hill School:

Rochelle Akerman-Long jump and 100 meter dash  
 Dominic Allegrezza- 4x100 meter relay and 100 meter dash  
 Coby Asselin-4x100 meter relay  
 Lily Bigelow-hurdles, Michelle Cote-4x100 meter relay  
 Sam DiColella-4x100 meter relay and javelin  
 Isabelle Frieswick-discus and 100 meter dash  
 Jared Joyce-4x100 meter relay and 400 meter, Lily Kerber-400 meter and shot put  
 Lauren Kirby-4x100 meter relay and 100 meter dash,  
 Molly McCarthy-long jump and 4x100 meter relay  
 Jillian Napolitano-hurdles and javelin  
 Jacob Newton-javelin, Bobby Roach-javelin and hurdles  
 Ben Skiba-hurdles, Hailey Solano-4x100 meter dash  
 Sophie Vincens-200 meter and the mile.





The mystery photos from the Winter issue of Home of the Braves are: Mrs. Amitrano and Mr. Amitrano

### WHAT IS IT???

*Did you guess correctly?*  
Do you know what this is?

There were no submitted correct guesses.

The picture is a LOCKER!!!



## Home of the Braves

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

Special thanks to the  
Upton and Mendon  
Cultural Councils  
and to Docuserve  
in Marlboro.



Questions or comments?  
Contact us!  
karnold@mursd.org

## Summer Reading for Teachers

By: Jenna Meleedy

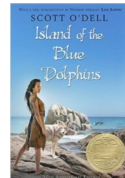
Ah, summer reading- we've all heard of it, and we've all had it. It's the only homework we get over the summer. Summertime to me is a time where I can just forget about school and not worry about all the due dates and fraction division, and essays. So when my best vacation of the year is interrupted by more instructions and packets; let's just say it's not exactly my favorite assignment ever. Don't get me wrong, I love reading. I'm a complete bookworm. But it seems to me like teachers always assign books that are, well... extremely boring. I always feel like I'm just wasting my time with these bland, uninspiring books when I could be reading series that are so much more captivating and entertaining and, well, interesting. So I thought; maybe the teachers need some new recommendations. Maybe they should do some summer reading too. So if there any teachers reading this, here is my summer reading list to you.

### 1. *Because of Mr. Terupt* by Rob Buyea



This is a realistic fiction book about a year in the life of a fifth grade classroom after a tragic accident and seen through the eye of seven students.

### 2. *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O' Dell



This is a historical fiction book about a woman who is abandoned by her tribe and has to learn to survive on an island alone for years.

### 3. *Out of my Mind* by Sharon Draper



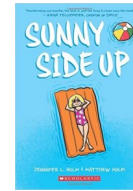
This is a realistic fiction book about a brilliant girl dismissed as 'mentally challenged' and 'stupid' because she has a disorder and cannot speak, walk, or write.

### 4. *K Blows Top* by Peter Carlson



This book is one for the history buffs. It is a historical book about the Cold War and Nikkita Krushchev (America's Enemy) going on a vacation to America.

### 5. *Sunny Side Up* by Jennifer Holm and Mathew Holm



Sunny Side Up is a graphic novel (like a comic book) about a girl sent away to live with her grandpa for the summer. But as a family secret becomes more and more apparent, she starts to wonder, why is she really here?

### 6. *Cinder* by Marissa Meyer



This is probably my favorite book series ever. Cinder is a sci-fi twist on Cinderella. It is based in New Beijing, China and is from the perspective of a mechanic who is shunned because she is a cyborg.

I also want to mention that I didn't choose these books because of popularity, critical acclaim, or size. I chose them because they all deliver messages worth thinking about.

They are extremely well written and are some of my personal favorites. I think that anyone at any age can appreciate them, no matter how old the main character is. They offer new perspectives of the world and it's challenges and I can only hope that someone reading this-student, teacher, or stranger- will give these books a chance. Trust me, this summer reading list is not a waste of your time.

*The Home of the Braves  
staff wishes everyone a happy,  
healthy and safe summer!*





