

# Pontiac Jr. High School Newsletter

May 2010

## Message from the Principal

It is hard to believe this is the last newsletter for the 2009-2010 school year! The year has gone by so quickly and we have had a great year!

We have one month of school left with a great deal of very important work remaining. Please be sure your student has time to complete homework, and has a good nights rest. It is very hard for students to focus in the spring and we all need to work together to be sure students do their best work the last weeks of school.

Graduation will be on Thursday, May 27 at 7:00 PM. This year we will open the doors for seating at 6:00 PM. We wish our students the best of luck in high school!



Registration packets will be sent home with all 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students on April 30. They are due to be returned by June 1. Please fill out all the paperwork needed to register your student and return it to school. If you are unable to pay your fees at this time, you should still return the registration paperwork. All school fees must be paid before the first day of school. You may send the registration papers back without physicals and dentals completed. They must also be turned in before the first day of school.

Student schedules will be ready to be picked up on August 11<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM and August 12 from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM. Students and or parents

may come into the Junior High School Office to pick up schedules. You may check out your locker and classroom assignments.

Thank you all for making this a great year at PJHS! Enjoy a wonderful summer vacation. Please be sure to come to the office to pick up your schedule on August 11 and 12. We look forward to the first day of school for 2010-2011 on August 18<sup>th</sup>. We will dismiss at 11:15 that day. Our first full day of school will be August 19<sup>th</sup>. Have a restful and enjoyable summer break!

*Mrs. Judy Donze*

## Upcoming Dates

- [April 28](#)- Progress reports go home
- [April 29](#)- School Improvement Day 11:15 dismissal
- [April 30](#)- Registration Packets sent home with 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Graders
- [May 1](#)- IESA Organization Music Contest at Prairie Central for Chorus
- [May 4](#)- Track meet at PTHS 4:15
- [May 5](#) – Sports Booster Meeting 6:00
- [May 5](#)- Music Dept. 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Chicago
- [May 2-8](#) – Teacher Appreciation Week
- [May 7](#) – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Sewer Project
- [May 8](#) – Science Triathlon
- [May 8](#) – Sports Booster Car Wash Fundraiser 8-1 at Fire Department
- [May 10](#) – Livingston County Track at Dwight 1:00 PM
- [May 12](#) – School Nurse Day
- [May 13](#) – 6<sup>th</sup> grade Orientation at PJHS 6:30 PM
- [May 20](#) – 7:00 PM Board of Education Meeting
- [May 25](#)- Last day of attendance for students; Graduation practice 1-3
- [May 26](#) – Institute – No attendance for students; 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Great America
- [May 27](#) – 8:00 -8:30 AM Report Cards for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students
- [May 27](#)- 7:00 PM Graduation; doors open at 6:00 PM.

## School Schedule Change for 2010- 2011

When school begins in August, the school will be open for students to enter at 8:00 AM. Bus drop off will begin at 8:00 AM. Breakfast will be served from 8:00 – 8:20. Students will report to home-room if they are here between 8:00 -8:20. The first bell for class will ring at 8:20 and the first class for the day will begin at 8:25. Students should plan to be at school by 8:20. School will dismiss at 2:30.

## PTO....

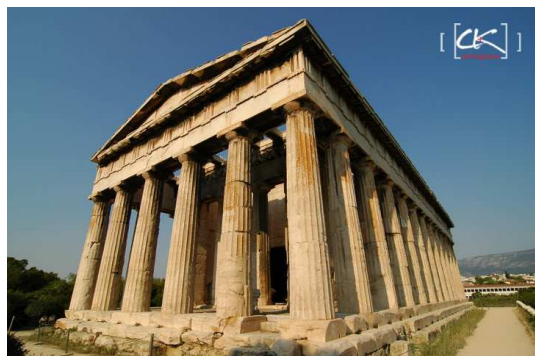
I would like to sincerely thank our District #429 PTO members for a great job this year as we transitioned from four separate PTO groups into one. The flexibility, cooperation, and hard work from all members has been great! We look forward to building a strong District PTO and I encourage parents to join us at any meeting you are able.

## Sports Boosters

Thank you to our Sports Boosters for all of your hard work throughout the year! Thank you for all the donations you make for our Athletic Programs. Our students benefit greatly from all of your hard work.

## Sixth Grade Social Studies News

As we enter this final month of school, I would like to give an update of what is happening in our class and some encouraging words for a successful end of the year!



We are continuing our unit about Ancient Greece. Activities will include a Mini Metric Olympics, Greek god project, and a Modern Wonders project.

I would like to encourage parents to help their children in the continuing development of effective study skills. Two of the most important areas on which parents can place emphasis are setting priorities and organization. If you want your child to treat homework and studying as a priority, then you have to teach them to set that priority. Be clear about your expectations. Let your child know that you expect homework completed first and that it be done well. Get in a routine of when and where the homework will be done. Cut back on other activities if they are preventing your child enough time to complete the homework. In addition keep necessary supplies on hand such as pens, pencils, paper, calculators, and dictionaries for studying.

Organizational skills are necessary in every area of life, not just homework and studying. Using the assignment book is one integral part of staying organized. Daily review of class notes can help your child get a better grasp of the material being taught. Teach your child to plan ahead so that projects can be broken down into smaller, more manageable chunks. Work toward short- and long-term goals.

You are the first resource for your child in learning how to study. Setting priorities and teaching organizational skills are the first step, and they will help your child succeed in more than just their studies!

Good luck in this final month of your child's 6<sup>th</sup> grade year at PJHS!!

Mrs. Mehlberg  
Sixth Grade Social Studies

## Student Council News – May

Thank you to all of my Student Council members for a great year!! You have worked hard all year and have accomplished many good things for the students at PJHS.

Congratulations to our Door Decorating Contest winners:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Mrs. Addis's room
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Mrs. Cheryl Krueger's room
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Mrs. Kerrins's room
- 4<sup>th</sup> place – Mrs. Hansen's room
- 5<sup>th</sup> place – Ms. Dunham's room

The Student Council gave blizzards and dilly bars to the winning classrooms. We would like to thank everyone for decorating the doors and bringing spring into the school! Also, a huge thank you to all of our judges – Mrs. Donze, Mr. Delong, Mrs. Hunt, and Mrs. Hanson.

## PJHS School Spirit Clothing

What a better way for your child to welcome the warmer weather than in a PJHS School Spirit t-shirt. Or for those cool spring mornings, maybe a sweatshirt or hoodie. Orders forms may be dropped off at PST or given to Mrs. McKinney (8<sup>th</sup> grade).

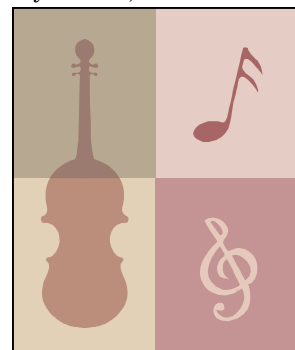


## Music News

Pontiac Junior High School Band participated in a concert band contest at Illinois State University on Saturday, April 17, 2010. The band performed Circus Bee arranged by Custer, Poem for Band by Tatgenhorst and Reverberations by Balmages.

The band received superior first division ratings from all three judges and placed third in its class behind Highland Middle School and Lakeview Junior High School. The band placed 7<sup>th</sup> over all out of the 20 schools participating. Congratulations to the band on this great accomplishment!

Contact: Laura Ramseyer 815/842-4101



**Music Boosters**

Thank you to the Music Boosters for all of your work to support our Band and Chorus Programs throughout the year. Thank you for again providing a trip to Chicago for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade music students in May.



# 7th Grade Greetings



## 7th Grade Social Studies

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade students are in the process of completing a unit on Europe. We have been studying the land, economy and people of the following European countries: United Kingdom, The Republic of Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, France, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Austria, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece. In correlation with our

Europe unit, students will be creating a power point presentation. The students will choose a country in Europe to research. They will be researching the countries history during WWII (1939-1945). In addition, a guest speaker will be coming to our classes to discuss the topic of WWII and the holocaust. Once our Europe unit is complete, we will be studying the continent of Asia!

## 7th Grade Literature

Seventh grade students have finished reading a variety of versions of Cinderella. Yeh Shen and Ashenputtel shared many similarities and differences with the North American fairy tale. After reading the German tale Ashenputtel, students were introduced to One Survivor Remembered, a documentary of the life of Gerda Weissmann. Gerda was a survivor of the Holocaust. Introducing a Holocaust time-

line will help students better understand the events of WWII as it relates to European country projects they are creating in social studies. As the year closes, the final MAZE fluency reading test for students will be administered in literature classes.

## From the desk of Miss. Rapp:

We are wrapping up the year with our last few spelling units. The students just got done with on a presentation where they did research on a famous person and came up with interview questions that they presented to the class. (see pictures) In English we will be finishing up our unit on pronouns at the beginning of May and then working on prepositions for the rest of the school year. I also plan on having the students work on a project where they will be making a newsletter that talks about their 7th grade year. Thank you to all the parents and relatives of the students for your continued support throughout the school year. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at school or via email at [rappmol@p429.k12.il.us](mailto:rappmol@p429.k12.il.us). I hope everyone has a great May!

~Miss. Rapp



## Character Counts

### Pillars to live by:

**CARING  
RESPECT  
FAIRNESS  
CITIZENSHIP  
RESPONSIBILITY  
TRUSTWORTHINESS**

## School Store

The School Store will have a sale every Tuesday until the end of the school year. Items on sale will include pencils, pens, mechanical pencils and erasers. Don't forget to bring your money on Tuesdays to take advantage of these bargain prices.

Picture Right: Baylee dressed up as Wolfgang Mozart while Raegan conducted the interview.



Picture Left: Chloe dressed up as Albert Einstein while Alexis conducted the interview.



## BUILDERS CLUB NEWS

Builders Club had another successful March of Pennies campaign this spring. Over an 8-day period, our school collected \$355.20 to help children born with birth defects. This amount will be sent off to the March of Dimes, and it will be put to very good use. Thank you to all who helped with this very worth while project.

As our year is coming to a close, we still have a couple of projects to work on. Some of us will be helping sell refreshments at the upcoming Science Triathlon on May 8. We are also planning on deliver-

ing corsages to the women at Asta Care for Mother's Day. In addition, we still have one final BINGO night at Asta Care on Wednesday, May 19th.

We are fortunate to have had some strong members this year who see the importance of helping others through our service organization. Thank you!

Mrs. Dunlap and Mrs. Vitzthum, sponsors

## 8th Grade Literature

We have started reading the novel [Nothing But the Truth](#) by Avi. The reading will be done in class so there won't be a lot of homework. However, if your child is absent, please make sure that they see me to check out a book so they can catch up on the reading he/she missed. The last day to check out library books is Monday, May 10th. We will return all library books on Thursday, May 20th. Please help your child find and return all library books. If you can't find a book, please pay the library fine.



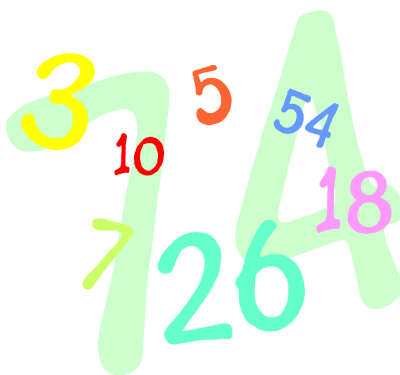
## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Mathematics

The school year is quickly coming to an end. We are getting prepared for Algebra I at PTHS. We are hitting the algebra material pretty hard these last few weeks. We are finishing up some work with linear and non-linear functions and will soon be working with polynomials. Covering this material should help all the students next year when they start Algebra I. We will continue to remind students to do their best, because the material will help them transition to Algebra I at PTHS. If there are any questions or concerns, please email me, [fentonbra@p429.k12.il.us](mailto:fentonbra@p429.k12.il.us).

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Algebra I

We are ending the chapter on polynomials. We will begin Chapter 8 Factoring and Quadratic Equations. This chapter can be difficult for students. Doing their homework, taking good notes, and asking questions will help. There are also some websites that can help. You can Google factoring trinomials. There are some videos that I have used in the past as a change of pace for mathematics instruction. We will continue on and get as far through the book as we can. We are on similar pace as the PTHS Algebra I classes. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me, [fentonbra@p429.k12.il.us](mailto:fentonbra@p429.k12.il.us).

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math



6th grade math students have just finished a major project. They had to develop a blueprint for a ranch-style home while following all the given guidelines. The homes had to fall between 1,400 - 2,000 square feet, include a pool, garage, garden, driveway, and cost between \$190,000-\$280,000. They worked very hard on their posters and the grades were very good. For extra credit, students had to figure out how much it would cost to rebuild two rooms at 110%. They could also figure their total cost for rebuilding if they had to pay the \$500 deductible and the insurance company only paid 80%. You can see some of the posters hanging in the hallway in the 6th grade wing. Great job 6th graders!

## PBIS Fundraiser Continues

Pontiac Junior High School is conducting a fundraiser. There's nothing to buy. We are simply asking you to **donate your unused/unwanted cellular phones** (please include chargers or accessories whenever possible), MP3 players, digital cameras/digital video cameras, small game consoles, video games, and DVD's. All of the proceeds will help fund PBIS- **Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports**. There is no cost to the school to participate in this program, so 100% of the proceeds will benefit the PBIS program at PJHS.



### Cell Phone Rules at PJHS.....

This is a reminder to all students about the cell phone rules here at the Jr. High. Cell phones are to be turned off as soon as you enter the building in the morning. The cell phones should remain off and in your locker for the entire day. If a phone is taken from a student they are allowed one warning after that a parent will have to pick up the cell phone.

# 6th Grade Literature



Book reports look great! Students did a wonderful job on their "Sandwich" Book Reports. Please walk down the 6<sup>th</sup> grade hall to see the "Menu" of good books. Most of the books came from the junior high library and are available for reading if the report makes you want to read it yourself.

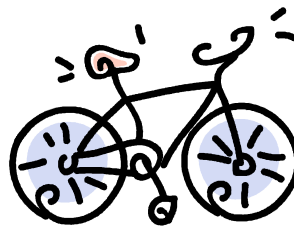
We have started the book, Crash. The author's name is Jerry Spinelli. Other books by him are Maniac Magee, Loser, Stargirl and Wrinker to name a few of his many. This is what Jerry Spinelli said about the book, Crash, "You see a lot of stories about bullies, but who ever writes from the bully's point of view. I did. Also, this story gave me a chance to make use of one of my favorite events of all time, the Penn Relays." The bully's nickname is Crash and he is a seventh-grade football hero. The theme of the story is respect. The students made a list of ways to demonstrate respect, such as following directions, waiting your turn to talk, holding a door, and helping someone. The definition of respect we are using is . . . treating people the way you want to be treated. Students will end this unit by making a scrapbook about the characters in the story.



# Science Humor

What's the difference between weather and climate?

You can't weather a tree, but you can climate!



### DID YOU KNOW.....

The color of lightning can indicate atmospheric conditions?

Blue lightning indicates hail, red lightning indicates rain, yellow or orange lightning indicates dust and white lightning indicates low humidity.

Why can't a bicycle stand up without a kick stand?

It is "two" tired!!

## 6th Grade Science

During this last month, the sixth grade scientists will be studying energy, forces, and motion. Students will learn how to calculate average speed and average acceleration. We will also be studying balanced and unbalanced forces, friction and gravity.

We have had a busy year learning about Life, Earth, and Physical sciences. It has been a pleasure being able to spend time with your students. Everyone one of them is unique and special in their own way and they have brought a smile to my face every day!

Have a safe and relaxing summer!

Mrs. Van Hoveln

## TO THE PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS

With high school quickly approaching and certain medical requirements needing to be accomplished before school starts, I wanted to take a brief moment of parent's time to provide some updates.

### Physical and Tetanus Vaccine

An updated Tetanus shot is required for all incoming freshmen. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, the Livingston County Health Department is providing immunizations by appointment only (815)844-7174. School physicals can also be provided by the health department for a fee of \$40. It is strongly encouraged to schedule appointments early as they fill up quickly during the summer. Students will not be allowed into school the first day without a current physical and tetanus shot. In addition to the Tetanus (Tdap) shot, the health department suggests considering other vaccinations for your child as well:

### Meningococcal Vaccine

Most colleges require the meningitis vaccine for incoming students. However, the vaccination is now good for 10 years. As a result, it is suggested for high school students. It is also more reasonable to receive the shot in high school (under the age of 18 yrs) versus paying the price for an adult.

### Gardasil (HPV) Vaccine

This vaccination is recommended for females ages 9-26. It is for prevention of HPV (Human Papillomavirus). Certain types of HPV have been closely linked with the development of cervical cancer and other genital cancers. This vaccination is in a 3 dose series and is available at the health department. Gardasil is now FDA approved for males (ages 9-26) as well to help prevent the transmission of HPV.

### Hepatitis A Vaccine

This vaccination is recommended for people traveling or working in other countries where Hepatitis A is prevalent. Any students traveling to other countries for mission work may consider this vaccination. The vaccine is given in 3 shots, so it is recommended that the series is started at least 1 month before traveling.

Please feel free to contact the school nurse (842-4343) or the Livingston County Health Department (844-7174) for any questions.

Rachel Lee RN  
School Nurse

## **MEDICATION PICK UP**

*Medications may be picked up on or after the last full day of school: Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>. Medications will not be sent home with the children; they need to be picked up by an adult in the main school office. These medications will be available in the office until Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>.*

*Thank you!*  
Rachel Lee RN  
School Nurse

Pontiac Jr. High School  
600 Morrow St  
Pontiac, Illinois 61764  
Phone: 815-842-4343  
Fax: 815-844-6230  
On the web  
[Www.pontiac429.org](http://www.pontiac429.org)

## *News from the School Counselor*

Spring is in the air.....however, spring time and holiday times are often periods when we see an increase in suicidal thoughts in youth. Therefore, we as parents and educators need to be more aware of our adolescents' thoughts and feelings. Every 90 minutes a teenager or young adult dies by suicide. Take a moment to read over some steps you can take when confronted with a young person who may be planning to take his/her life.

- Always take suicidal warning signs seriously and respond immediately.
- Ask kids about their thoughts and feelings if you are concerned.
- Watch your child carefully especially if he or she seems depressed.
- Seek outside help and support for your child.
- Educate yourself on adolescent depressive illness and suicide.
- Assure your child that he can feel better and there are people who can help.
- Know that early intervention is a key to successful treatment.
- Understand that treatment should be a team approach consisting of psychotherapist/psychiatrist, parents, relatives, etc.

### Suicide Warning Signs:

- Threatening self; such as talking or writing about wanting to hurt self.
- Has rage or uncontrolled anger.
- Giving things away or saying goodbye.
- Increase in drug or alcohol use.
- Withdrawing from friends or family.
- Expressing no reason or purpose for living- feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, depressed mood, poor self esteem, or feelings of guilt.
- Has trouble concentrating or making decisions.
- Neglecting personal care.
- Feels tired or exhausted most of the time.
- Suffering a recent and significant loss such as the death of parent/friend.
- Changes in eating and/or sleeping habits

If you notice any warning signs in your child's behavior that indicates he/she may be feeling depressed or suicidal, please take this seriously and either go to the nearest hospital emergency room or contact IHR at (815) 844-6109 or The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at (800) 273-8255.

Marci Hunt  
QMHP, MA, LCPC  
School Counselor

## *Dean's Notes*

With this unusually pleasant spring comes the desire for everyone to get outside and enjoy the weather. Summer is lurking right around the corner, but it remains important that we finish the year strong. Lots of material and lessons still need to be covered.

As you are probably well aware this has been the first year of implementation of PBIS in District 429. At the junior high level we have seen great results from this program. Student behaviors have been more positive and have followed school expectations. Total office referrals are down 25% compared to last year! We will continue forward with this program next year as well. Between the prizes and the celebrations the students who have followed expectations have been rewarded handsomely.

Please continue to monitor your student's attendance, and notify us when they will not be able to be in attendance. Our attendance rate this year as far as truancy is concerned has also improved greatly. The number one indicator of success is academic engagement time.

Let's look out for each other and have a strong finish to the school year.

Mr. DeLong, Dean of Students