



FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

From the Desk of Mr. Giertz



The month of February has come and gone and spring is hopefully around the corner. We saw our quick moving 3rd quarter mid-terms pass us by in February, as well as, wrap up our final quick days of winter MAP testing for all our students'.

The month of March will bring upon us a few key events and dates. First, we will see for the first time the new and updated state testing format, IAR (formerly known as PARCC) come upon us starting March 11 and ending after spring break, April 15. This is a test for grades 3rd-8th consisting of ELA and Mathematics. We urge our parents to help keep their students fresh by

getting plenty of rest the night before to help them do the best we know they can.

The month of March also brings to us our Band and Chorus' Solo and Ensemble hosted by Milton Pope. On March 16, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Hatcher, and a slew of band/chorus directors from all schools around the Grundy and LaSalle county area will host and have students' competing in music and band performances throughout the day. This is quite the feat to put on and host, so many praises to the music and band department we have here at MP.

Finally, I want to give our Student of the Month students' the recognition they deserve. These students are being recognized because of the character they displayed continuously throughout the year and especially in the month of February. Their hard work and dedication to their peers, homework, teachers, and extra-curricula's' are what make them SOTM for February. Those students' are:

K- Crayton Chapman
1st- Mason Arozamena
2nd- Cora Chapman
3rd- Sophia Swift
4th- Elizabeth Kerekes
5th- Delaney Puleo
6th- Cara Peterson
7th- Reece Puleo
8th- Calvin Maierhofer

Hope you have a wonderful March.

Sincerely,

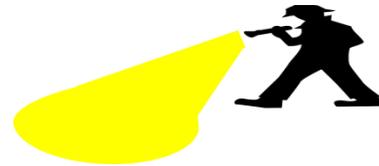
Mr. Giertz

**Upcoming February
Activities/Dates**

- 1st SOTM for February
- 2nd 8th VB Regionals @ MVK 9:00
- 5th Scholastic Bowl @ Oglesby 3:45
- 6th 4th/5th Grade to SHS for Beauty and the Beast play (9:00)
- 6th Scholastic Bowl @ Marquette 4:00
- 7th Scholastic Bowl @ Home 4:00
- 7th Articulation Day (Dismissal @ 2:30)
READING NIGHT! 6:30-7:30
BOOK FAIR BEGINS
- 8th BOOK FAIR
- 11th-21st IAR Testing Begins
MPCC Meeting @ 6:30
- 12th Scholastic Bowl @ Home 4:30
- 14th VIP Lunch for 1st, 4th and 7th
Articulation Day (Dismissal @ 2:30)

- Scholastic Bowl @ Home 4:00
- 15th End of 3rd Quarter
- 16th Solo and Ensemble Contest @ Milton Pope
- 19th Fire Drill
Scholastic Bowl @ Tonica 4:00
- 20th School Board Meeting @ 6:30
- 21st Scholastic Bowl @ Home 4:00
- 22nd Dismissal @ 2:00
- 25th-29th Spring Break!

**Teacher Spot Light of the
Month**



This month's teacher spot light focuses on our elementary special education teacher, Mrs. Clark and our Jr. High Literature teacher, Mrs. Thorsen.

Mrs. Clark writes:

This month our classroom has been extremely busy. The older students have been reading the story *Hatchet*. Along with reading the story, they have been creating a pamphlet of what they would teach others in case they were ever in a situation where they needed survival skills. They have

also been working on historical fiction book reports, research papers on natural disasters, and waiting for warm weather to arrive. The younger students have been focusing on reading non-fiction stories about animals and doing research on their favorite animal. After they choose their favorite animal, they will make a replica of their animal out of recycled materials. It is crazy that spring break is near, and I cannot wait to see what the next few months bring!

Mrs. Thorsen writes:

Literature/English with Mrs. Thorsen

Students have been working diligently in literature class upon returning from Winter break!

In 6th Grade Literature, we have been reading the novel, **My Side of the Mountain**. Sam Gibley runs away from home. He uses the natural resources around him to create a home and survive the seasons in the mountains. Students have finished learning about the trees and birds with the sounds that they make. We should be completing the book and

testing on the story the week before Spring break. We will celebrate the ending with Sam's favorite breakfast—pancakes, syrup, jam, juice, applesauce, and some dandelion tea. (Compliments of my dad and mom).

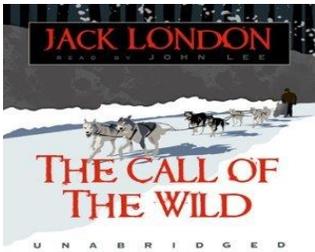
In 7th Grade Literature, we have been reading the novel, **The Outsiders**. The gang of misfits challenges us on our perceptions of who has the most heroic heart and best of intentions. The classic novel reaches out to each student in their own way. Do they relate more to a Soc or a Greaser given their individual characteristics? We have completed a character study packet on each Greaser. We will be taking the test before Spring break as well. We will celebrate the ending with Pony Boy's favorite meal—sloppy joes, bottles of coke, and ice cream.

In 8th Grade Literature, we finally finished studying the Diary of Anne Frank a week

ago. With the “polar vortex” days, it seemed I could never finish the movie. They were assigned a Character Essay to write about upon the completion of the play and the movie. Currently, we are reading the novel, **The Call of the Wild**. We are beginning to explore the concept of anthropomorphism in which the dogs have human-like characteristics. Students are filling out dog packets characterizing each dog and their ability to adapt to the unforgiving North. Plus, we are filling out a packet of owners who have shared time with the main character, Buck. Has Buck adapted well to his new surroundings in the North or has he reacted badly leading us to believe he will not survive in his new environment? We will not be able to test on the **Call of the Wild** before Spring Break, but probably close afterwards. To end the novel, we will have granola bars, protein shakes, bacon/sausage, and some “Gold Rush” gum.

In 6th Grade English, we are feverishly trying to finish our Research Reports on “Someone Who Has Changed the World”. Our goal is to have all of the “parts” to the research finished by March 15th. We should be practicing our reports before break. Then after break, have them present to parents, friends, and special loved ones. The winter season keeps us inside which helps the students to focus on their studies. However, spring is right around the corner. Their minds as well as my own will start to think of being outside and enjoying the fresh air. ***I’ll leave you with this quote...***

“I truly believe that everything we do and everyone we meet is put on our path for a purpose. There are no accidents; we are all teachers. If we are willing to pay attention to the lessons we learn, trust our positive instincts, and not to be afraid to take risks...life will be a vision of success.” Marla Gibbs



such a great job of participating and helping to raise money for our program and this year they did an exceptional job. We raised over \$450 towards the Character Counts funds which will begin to put that right back into our upcoming pancake breakfast.

Our March theme will be our annual Penny Wars and raising money for our local charities and American Heart Association. Students' will get the opportunity to bring in their loose change and compete against the other classes to see who raises the most money to win the banner. The contest brings out the competitive edge in our Pilots but when the result is tallied up, students get to hear how awesome the amount raised truly goes to great places to help those who are less fortunate.

Character Counts



Our Character Counts Team continues to work at creating a culture of continuous character building and at increasing the level of positive behavior in the school environment. In February, our committee organized our annual Crush Pop/Water sales where students' had a chance to put down kind words to their friends, teachers, and even parents. Our students do

Sept. - Friday Spirit Wear

Oct. - Red Ribbon Week

Nov. - Door Decorations/Canned Good Donations

Dec. - Crazy Christmas Days'

Jan. - Hot Chocolate Read Aloud

Feb. - Crush Pop/Water

March- Reading Night

Apr. - Poetry Month/ Pancake Breakfast

May- Field Day