

The Alexander Hamilton Junior High Journal

Issue 1, Volume 1, December 2011

Marc Baiocco, Principal
Andrea Hamilton, Assistant Principal

Welcome Hamilton families to our new Junior High School journal. We are beginning this new initiative to communicate the wonderful opportunities provided to our JHS students. I would like to thank all of the teachers who made this publication possible and the students who shared their projects. As we prepare for 2012, I ask that all students and parents take a moment and put aside all of the distractions that prevent conversation. Parents please use this “quiet time” to discuss, with your child, their academic progress. In addition, please use this as a teachable moment to give them strategies that may make them more effective students. I often say “together we will make Hamilton a school of excellence.” Education is a partnership. The Hamilton staff has vowed to partner with you to make your child’s education experience meaningful. I look forward to the many events we will share together as your child transitions into the high school.

-Marc Baiocco

7th Grade News



Science, Mr. Thompson

In Science 7, we are currently looking at animal and plant cells and establishing an understanding of the structure and function in living things. In addition, we will learn how to use a compound light microscope.



Reading, Mrs. Brenna

Grade 7 Reading will be embarking upon a survival unit in January. The students will explore various pieces of literature where the main characters have to survive various obstacles.



Math, Mrs. Leis

As the 7th grade math students learn about organizing data, they will use both a **frequency table** and a **stem-and-leaf plot**. The students will learn how to use measures of central tendency to describe trends in a set of data. The students will be interpreting and constructing many different types of graphs used to display data. A **histogram** shows the frequency of data within equal intervals. Another way to display data is a **box-and-whisker plot**. As the students

continue to study data and the ways data can be displayed, encourage him or her to be aware of the ways data is presented in the media. Keep your eyes out for the Christmas take home test.



Exploratory Language Italian 7, Mr. Aiello

This quarter the Exploratory Italian class is being introduced to the basics of the Italian language. We have been working on greetings, introductions and other simple social expressions. The class has also learned how to count to 100, give the dates and talk about the weather. Everyday the students learn a new vocabulary word and sentence in our *Parola del Giorno* section of our lesson. We also plan to learn about the Italian Christmas tradition of *La Befana* in the coming days.



Exploratory Language Spanish 7, Ms. Sharkey

Ms. Sharkey’s Exploratory Language - Spanish 7 class is off to a great start! We started with the alphabet and have learned many new vocabulary words and phrases related to greetings, numbers, days of the week, months of the year, weather, classroom objects and colors. Now, we are learning how to ask and answer questions about ourselves

and will end the marking period with autobiographies before moving on to French.



Art, Mr. Blondel

My seventh graders just finished a mixed media project using graphite, ink, and water color pencils. The project focused on depth of space as we discussed the meanings of foreground, middle ground and back ground. We further discussed how as younger children we would show depth in our drawings as compared to some of the ways we can create depth now. The students were required to draw their portrait from life, looking in a mirror. We went over the proportions of a face and they were shown how to use preliminary lines to mark off where their features would be drawn.

By: David Valle-Ortiz By: Genesis Pacheco



Home & Careers, Ms. Tenzer

7th grade Home & Careers students are learning how to use the kitchen and follow recipes. So far, we have baked cupcakes and decorated them like turkeys for the Thanksgiving holiday. The next project we will be working on are holiday treats that can be made to look like Santa Claus. We will be sharing pictures of our projects so families can see what we have been up to. As the course progresses, we will be covering topics such as financial literacy, consumer behavior, career exploration and nutrition and wellness.



Music, Mr. Rios

Mr. Rios is teaching students about echolocation in music. We are also participating in classroom activities that simulate echolocation. We are learning about a remarkable young man named Ben Underwood who lost his eye sight at 3 years old but developed an amazing ability to use echolocation to get around without a walking stick.

Humanities here at Hamilton!



ELA 7 & 8, Mr. Vergara

Working in close collaboration with Mr. Stout and the Cultural Heritage curriculum, we are incorporating historical fiction, primary source documents, articles, and personal narratives to achieve a truly interdisciplinary, thematic approach to the humanities. We are continuing our commitment to improving writing and are finding that our color-coding system is highly effective. We can easily identify those areas in our writing that need to be addressed, such as varying transitions, providing more supporting details, and writing stronger thesis statements. We've recently added purple to help us tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We've also begun "blogging". Our independent reading assignments are posted online, and students post their own responses to the books they are reading outside of class. Please visit our class website at www.class-in-progress.weebly.com. You can also see what we're doing in English and access valuable class resources.



Social Studies 7 & 8, Mr. Stout

English Language Arts and Social Studies this year has brought about many changes. Some of these changes have presented some new challenges; the block schedule has allowed Mr. Vergara and Mr. Stout to combine their curricula so that students get a richer experience with both the literature in their English class and the study of history in Social Studies. For example, in grade seven, students recently compared and contrasted themes in the novel, *The Giver*, with life in Puritan Massachusetts in the 1600s. The result was an opportunity for students to practice deeper, more analytical thinking and writing. In addition, by focusing on the development of advanced reading and writing skills in the junior high school, Alexander Hamilton is becoming a leader in New York State's initiative to implement The Common Core Standards for Literacy. While many schools are making plans to integrate the common core in the future, we are using it on a daily basis.



English as a Second Language, Ms. Carrasquillo

The ESL Humanities course is designed for intermediate and advanced English language learners in grades 7 and 8. Meeting for two periods everyday allows for a cross-disciplinary study of both English and Social Studies. Currently, students are working on an "Early America Unit". They just finished reading Sandra Cisneros's The House on Mango Street. The essential question of the unit and novel is: *How are communities formed?* Although this novel takes place in a modern United States city, students will be able to draw comparisons to community-building in early America. They are in the editing phase of a final project where students wrote their own "stories" about their community.

8th Grade News



Math, Mrs. Leis

The 8th grade math students are diving into algebra. We will be multiplying binomials using the FOIL method. The students can use the F-O-I-L, the box method or the "fat kid" to find their solutions. You should ask your student to show you which method they choose. Next we will be factoring using GCF, DOTS and factoring trinomials. Keep your eyes out for the Christmas take home test.



Earth Science, Mr. MacLeish

The accelerated Earth Science class has been studying the structure and movement of the Earth's rocky crust. We have investigated the Earth's structure, its composition and how its surface changes.

We have been moving quickly through the content and have expanded our knowledge, appreciation and understanding of the Earth's complex systems.



Reading, Mrs. Brenna

Grade 8 Reading recently completed their Heritage Unit. Within this unit the students completed research, read the novel, Letters From Rifka, by Karen Hesse, wrote poetry and developed their narrative writing pieces. The unit culminated with a heritage luncheon where the students were able to sample various foods from each of their ethnic backgrounds. In addition the students visited the Ellis Island Museum where they were able to follow in the footsteps of the main character from their anchor novel.



Italian 8, Mr. Aiello

This class has been hard at work learning how to describe people and things. As this is the students' first class in Italian, we are busy mastering the basics of the language. We have just finished a unit on the seven ways to say *the* and the verb *essere*. We have also been sharpening our geography knowledge as we have learned the names of all of the countries that surround the Italian peninsula. We are also planning to explore some Italian holiday traditions during the coming weeks.



Spanish 8, Mr. Ribeiro

We are currently learning how to tell time in Spanish. Students created their own clocks and presented them to their peers. Each class then voted on the top 3 clocks. Pictures were taken of the winners which will be posted on the school website. The students are using the clocks to practice telling time in the classroom. Students will also provide at what times they have specific classes during the school day.



Science 8, Mr. Thompson

In Science 8, we just concluded our chemistry chapter and will now look at the planets and stars in our astronomy chapter. A project, Adopt an Element, is due on December 22.



Technology 8, Mr. Hernandez

In technology we just completed a "Build your own spacecraft project" in which the students were tasked to implement, design and construct a model spacecraft build from materials found at home.

Currently in technology education we are formulating a meal plan, which we will be put on a spreadsheet along with accompanying graphs. Students will then compare their meal plans and annotate the differences and compare them to a healthy meal plan. It will be summed up with a written report done in Word 2010.



8th grader,
Justin DeLeon
with his spacecraft
project



Health 8, Ms. Marks

Last month, 8th grade Health studied Nutrition. We discussed the many different nutrients that food provides us with and what these nutrients do for our bodies. Students brought in the Nutrition Fact labels from the foods that they like to eat and they learned how to read them properly. We also practiced ways to measure portions correctly. In order to see that we can make better choices when eating at fast food restaurants, the students participated in an activity where they were able to “visit” their favorite fast food restaurant and examine the nutrition facts on their menus! We played Calcium Bingo so that students could become aware of the many foods that are high in this nutrient! Towards the end of the unit, the class made a trip to the computer lab with their daily food diary that they had been recording. They visited a government website called “Choosemyplate.gov” that is full of information and resources on healthy eating. The students used a diet analysis program on the website to input the foods they ate from their daily diary. The program then generated charts that showed the students what nutrients and food groups were lacking or too much in their diets. For a project grade, the students reflected on their eating habits based on the food tracker analysis. They set goals for themselves to improve their eating habits in the future! As the culmination of our Nutrition Unit, some classes earned the opportunity to have a “Healthy” Potluck Thanksgiving Feast!



Currently, we are studying Bullying, Violence Prevention, and Conflict Resolution. So far, we identified, analyzed and discussed what bullying is, who bullies and why, the different types of bullying, and the effects that bullying can have on our lives. We took an anonymous poll on the type(s) of bullying we think occur most and brainstormed ways to stop it. We analyzed the importance of names and the effect that name-calling can have by meeting Ms. Marks’ friends “Put Up Pal” and “Put Down Dude”. Ms. Marks also read us a book called “Have You Filled Your Bucket Today”? We all carry invisible buckets that can be filled by the nice things that people say and do. However, bucket dippers are like bullies and they take away our good feelings. The book reminds us that saying and doing nice things for others not only makes them feel good, but also makes us feel good as well. After the story we went around the circle and everyone had a chance to say something to “fill the bucket” of the person sitting next to them. We also got to create and design our own buckets to hold the coupons that we give out when people fill our buckets. The coupons serve as a reminder to always treat others how

you want to be treated. Mr. Julius came to visit our class and talk to us about Conflict Resolution. In groups, we evaluated the different ways to resolve a conflict and determine which we think is the most effective. Conflicts happen all the time because of our differences. It’s how you resolve them that matters. Recently, we watched a video called “Bullies, Loners and Violence”. It was like an episode of MTV’s True Life. The video encouraged us to think about how it would feel if we were the ones being bullied. Next, we will be focusing on cyber-bullying and internet safety.



Junior High Sports

Five of our junior high students qualified for the varsity track team and will be competing with the high school students this winter:

Jordan Scott, Maria Puerta, Sebastian Huidobro, Laura Gonzales, and Chelsea Garvey!

Modified Sports Offerings (7/8 Grades):

Boys Soccer	Boys Basketball	Baseball (Boys)
Girls Soccer	Girls Basketball	Softball (Girls)



Teen Learning Center

Just a reminder that TLC (Teen Learning Center) is open in the Library on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 7:00-7:45. Please encourage you child to attend for extra help in English, Math, Science and Social Studies.



Library News

Alexander Hamilton High School Library has a ton of different choices you could read from fiction, free choice books, to nonfiction, subject driven books. Please visit our library and ask Mrs. Watson or Mrs. Wright for what you are looking for. You can reach our database of choices online on the Hamilton website under the library tab at: <http://elmsd.org/hamilton/library.html>

We also have a partnership with the Ardsley Public Library. They can be reached online at <http://www.ardsleylibrary.org/> or at 693-6636. Please visit, borrow and request titles of your choice. We are here to help make reading an everyday part of your lives. Read for information. Read for fun!



Brenna's Reading Corner

Looking for a good book to read over the Christmas break? Here are some suggestions:

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

A 16 year old girl becomes a contender in a competition where girls are pitted against boys in a fight to death. A new science fiction thriller.

Fallen Angels by Walter Dean Myers

A 17 year old boy right out of Harlem High School enlists in the Vietnam War. Follow his life as he spends a year of active duty on the front lines of the war. Written in true Walter Dean Myers tradition.

Life (In the Cards) by Mariah Fredricks

Third in a series, Syd and her friends use the tarot cards to predict their future. What will happen next? If you like Meg Cabot's books try this one.



Clubs

Become a member of STAR, Students Terminating Abusive Relationships

Who: STAR is a peer leadership program offered to all 8th grade and high school students.

What: Star promotes respect, equality and trust in dating relationships. Students attend monthly meetings to discuss relationships, dating and abuse. Members coordinate related awareness activities in our school and community.

When: STAR meetings will take place the second Wednesday of every month at **2:30**.

Where: Room 318

Why: Alexander Hamilton understands the reality of unhealthy relationships and relationship abuse. STAR provides students with the opportunity to discuss the issues they're facing, while raising awareness about abuse in dating and other relationships.



The International Club

The International Club meets every other week to learn about different countries and different cultures through music, movies and food. This club is open to students in all grades. Please see Ms. Sharkey for more information.



Greetings from the Nurse's office!

In case you have not yet found your way to the health office, it is on the ground floor, Room 100. My name is Mrs. Cordero.

I am here to help you stay healthy, and, when you are injured or sick, I'm the one to see!

I'd like to welcome all of the 7th graders to Hamilton, and I wish you success this year and all of your years in Jr. and Sr. High School. If you haven't already done so, please hand in your 7th grade physical and dental exams ASAP.

Here are a few hints to stay healthy this winter: WASH, WASH, WASH your hands!

This is the MOST important way to help your body fight colds, and flu. When is it important to do so? Well, before eating, after using the bathroom, or coming in contact with someone who has a cold-such as shaking hands with them.

If you do come down with a cold or cough remember to cough into you arm, not your hands! If you forget, then wash your hands right away.

When should you stay home when you are sick? If you have a temperature above 100, or if you have body aches, or a really bad cough. Take time to rest, and drink warm fluids-like tea and chicken soup. Remember that an adult should call the attendance office when you will be absent.

Here's to an exciting year, filled with friendship and lot's of learning! Come by my office for a visit and of course when you need my help.



Guidance Department

Our Mission:

To assist students in educational planning by:

Setting and reaching academic goals; developing a positive attitude towards learning; recognizing and utilizing academic strengths.

To help students grow academically, personally, and socially: to develop self-knowledge and making effective decisions; developing relationship skills by making healthy choices, and improving responsibility for resolving conflicts.

Mrs. Stephanie Luccioni

Guidance Counselor

Students whose last name begins with "A-M"

Phone: (914) 592-8598

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Mrs. Monica Ahern

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Upcoming Events

- The junior high school will be visiting the IMAX Theatre at the Palisades Mall on December 21st to view Lewis and Clark: Great Journey West and Dinosaurs of Patagonia. Afterwards, we'll enjoy lunch at TGIFriday's.
- Our Junior High Awards Ceremony for the 1st marking period will take place in the auditorium on December 22nd.
- Our 8th grade entrepreneurs will be hosting a Holiday Sale, with Ms. Tenzer, on December 20th and December 22nd during periods 2 and 3. They have worked very hard on organizing this event and have decided that a portion of the proceeds will be donated to their favorite charities.



- Auditions for Annie will take place soon! Students should listen for announcements. Auditions are open to all students in grades 7-9. Rehearsals will begin in January. Also needed - students for Stage Crew and Promotion. The show is scheduled for March 23rd and 24th, 2012. Please see Mr. Rios for more information.

Holiday Recess **December 26th – January 2nd**
(School Reopens on **Tuesday, January 3rd, 2012**)

Board of Education Meeting
Wednesday, January 4, 2012, 8PM
AHHS Auditorium

PTA Meeting
Tuesday, January 10, 2012, 7-8PM
Grady Library

AHHS Parents' Coffee Hour
Thursday, January 12th, 2012, 7PM
AHHS Library

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Monday, January 16th, 2012
School Closed

Last day of the 2nd Marking Period
Last day of 1st Semester
Friday, January 20th, 2012

Report Cards Mailed Home
Friday, January 27th, 2012