

“A New Look at America”



President Barack Obama

RJK WORD

Volume 31, Issue 2

March, 2009

“No Name-Calling Week” Contest
Calls Attention to Verbal Bullying

by Staff

The “No Name-Calling Week” Contest, sponsored locally by RJK’s PBIS Committee, collected essays, poems, and other writings, artwork, videos and music CDs, from students, in the 11-15 age range, on students’ experiences, observations and feelings about name-calling and verbal bullying.

The top three winning entries, judged on style and content, will win first, second and third place prizes to the school store.

The first place winner’s work will be submitted to the National Contest, where the prizes include an Apple i-Pod, books from Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing Company, a No Name-Calling Week project kit, and assorted other prizes.

The local school contest was held from January 26 through January 30, 2009.

The winners from our middle school will be announced at a later date. Stay tuned.

HOMEWORK HOTLINE Helps Students

Due to the success of RJK's Homework Hotline pilot program, school officials have expanded it to include all teams. The program is designed to help students keep up to date with their work. Students will now be able to take advantage of the Homework Hotline to get their daily homework assignments for their four core subjects.

A recording will give the homework for that day for that team. The recording will repeat as many times as needed.

The system can be accessed after 2:30 p.m. by dialing the school’s phone number, **796-3058**, and then the appropriate extension for a team.

The individual team numbers are:

- Team 6R - dial ext. 20701
- Team 6J - dial ext. 20708
- Team 6K - dial ext. 20709
- Team 6M - dial ext. 20710
- Team 7R - dial ext. 20704
- Team 7J - dial ext. 20706
- Team 7K - dial ext. 20703
- Team 8R - dial ext. 20702
- Team 8J - dial ext. 20705
- Team 8K - dial ext. 20707

Editorial

Change

Dear Readers,

Many things have happened since our last issue. In our community we have had many after-school activities and events, and in the world, we have a new president with new policies.

In our community, we have had boys’ and girls’ basketball, we have had the Student of the Month trips, we have had wrestling, we have had the New York State ELA exam, and we have had many other things.

Life in our community is busy and growing. I am glad that the students in the Robert J. Kaiser Middle School are employing themselves with activities in the community.

In the world, many major events have taken place. The conflict in the Middle East is a bad major event. With tensions rising and war, this is a conflict that hopefully can be ended peacefully.

On the bright side, I think that every American has welcomed Barack Obama as our new president. I am happy that we have change working in America. I think that Robert J. Kaiser Middle will wish Barack Obama the best of luck as President of the United States of America.

You can use Barack Obama to inspire you. He did something that was very hard to do. He is the first African-American to be a president. If you put your mind to something, you can do anything. Try your best at everything you do. Maybe join a new sport, like track and field, or maybe join tennis. Stay after school one day with one of your teachers to get better at something you struggle with.

I hope that you will look up to our president and will be inspired to do better. Step it up a notch. I wish you good luck!

Aaron Weiss
Editor-in-Chief,
RJK WORD

RJK WORD

- Editor-in-Chief.....Aaron Weiss
- Reporters.....Sandra Bell, Kristen Clyatt
-Yazmine Gandulla, Yadira Montes,
-May Rosario, Linda Seminario
- PhotographersJoshua Mace
- Technical Assistants..... Rusty Loomis, Larissa Roussos
- Typists.....Staff
- Advisor.....Mrs. Barbara Hill
- Director of ELA, S.S., Library Ed.....Mr. Ted Kusulas
- Principal.....Ms. Deborah Wood

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Malik Murray Wins Honorable Mention in Art Competition

By Sandra Bell



Malik Murray

-Photos by Elizabeth Bassett

Malik Murray, an eighth grade student in Mrs. Elizabeth Bassett's art class, won Honorable Mention at the Hudson Valley Regional Scholastic Art Awards Competition.

Malik created a glossy pink ceramic bowl (see photo right) that was made of rolling clay coils attached together into three dimensional form.

Malik was presented with a Certificate, and he is eligible to enter his work in a professional art show that is open to the public.

I interviewed Malik and asked him if he would say a few words about how he felt when he found out that he had won Honorable Mention for his bowl.



Ceramic Bowl

"I worked hard on my bowl that I made in art class. When I got my Certificate in the mail I was so proud of myself, and so was my teacher, Mrs. Bassett, and my parents."

Congratulations, Malik!

Students of the Month Honored

Congratulations to the following students for doing well in their classes during the months of September through December. The students were selected by their teachers for special recognition.

Students selected to be honored in the month of December were: James Gibson, Andrew Krotje, Stacey Gray, Haley Paolini, Brittany Ianuale and Cheyenne Chessa.

Additional December Students of the Month were: Mason Solberg, Brandon Cerna, Jose Melendez, John Camera, Sarah Accarino, Noche Salas, Jason Fallick, Cristian Garzon-Cruz and Brittany Rupp.

November Students of the Month were: Amanda Meade, Marshall Ulger, Ashlynn Barbarite, Rebecca Smyth, Helena Hall, Jose Gonzalez Lopez, Cecilia Caravaja, and Angelica Diaz.

Also: Malina Rivera, Jeremy Gwiozdowski, Anthony Lombardi, Joseph Kern, Aaron Weiss and Pujan Patel.



-Photo by Jack Etter

November Students of the Month pose for the camera with certificates.

October Students of the Month were: Luis Ocasio, Adam Accarino, Whitney Derienzo, Rina Rraci, Aslyyah McKune, Juan Hernandez, Brandi Gilmore, Abanub Daif, Jaclyn Bellamy, Nickolas Koenig, Kayla Dandridge, Gary Bracey, Jenny Rivera, Joseph Klein and Amber Bagatta.

Students of the month for September were: Yadira Montes, Destiny LeGrand, Carmen Camacho, Autumn

Brown, Devin Williams, Annette Purcell, Michael D'Abbraccio, Elizabeth Cutler, Jonathan Harned, Kevin Kane, Deanna Jersey and Robert Rivera.

Keep up the good work!

Show your school spirit!

Order a Yearbook!

Only \$35.00!

**Please pay cash or check,
payable to "R.J.K. Yearbook."**

Order from:

**Miss Cahalan,
Yearbook Advisor
Room 13**



Spotlight on Mr. Kaufmann

by Larissa Roussos and Nicole Contrys

Science Corner

The Little Raindrop

By Wyatt Connolly

- Q: How long have you been teaching at the RJK Middle School?
- R: 34 years. I started in the St. John's Middle School across town in 1975.
- Q: What do you teach?
- R: Health Education and Physical Education.
- Q: Do you see any differences between your students now and years ago?
- R: Students years ago were more focused and set goals. Today, students seem to "live in the moment."
- S: Do you do any coaching? If so, which sport?
- R: I coach in the High School — Girls' Volleyball, Boys' Wrestling and Girls' Softball.
- Q: Do you have any favorite activities or sports that you enjoy after school hours?
- R: I enjoy fishing a lot, playing golf a lot and traveling in my camper.
- Q: Do you have any pets?
- R: I have an 11 year old Black Lab.



Mr. Kaufman

- Q: Will you miss coming to RJK every day?
- R: Not really. It is time to do something else. I just don't know what it is.
- S: Do you have any advice for new teachers?
- R: Good luck!
- Q: Thank you, Mr. Kaufmann. We wish you good luck in your retirement at the end of the school year!

Why, hello, my name is Oliver. I'm a raindrop. I'm here to tell you about my trip through the water cycle.

I started out as a water molecule in a tomato plant. Then one day it was very hot. The sun heated me up and pulled me out of the plant, and I evaporated into the atmosphere. This is called transpiration.

Once I got into the atmosphere, it was rather cold. I turned back into water. I saw a bunch of water droplets that I knew. Since we were all very cold we got close to each other and condensed into a cloud, which I later found out to be something called condensation.

Because we were all close together and there were so many of us, we kept running into each other and getting stuck together. Soon, we all got so big from running into each other, that the cloud could not hold us anymore.

It began to precipitate. We all fell back down to earth as little raindrops.

That is my story of how I went through the water cycle.

(We welcome your submissions.)

All-County Chorus to Perform March 8

By Sandra Bell

I interviewed Miss Phillips about All-County Chorus. Her responses are below:

- Q: When did you start teaching All-County?
- R: When I came to Monticello 17 years ago.
- Q: How do you choose who makes All-County when there are so many people who audition?
- R: It is so hard to choose. I try to choose students who not only sing well at their audition, but who also participate in school chorus, sing well in school chorus, and who have good behavior.
- Q: How many people tried out for All-County this year in grades 6-8?
- R: There is no Junior High Chorus this year so only sixth graders were eligible. There were probably about 50-60 students who tried out this year.

- Q: How many students of these are in All-County?
- R: Ten students and two alternates.
- Q: What are some of the songs that you are rehearsing this year?
- R: We are rehearsing "I Had a Little Nut Tree," "Coulter's Candy," "Cock-a-Doodle Doo" and "Hine Ma Tov."
- Q: When is the big concert?
- R: The big concert is on Saturday, March 8.
- Q: Where will the concert be held this year?
- R: This year we are fortunate to have the festival in Monticello.
- Q: Are you excited about the concert?
- R: I am very excited. We have a nationally known choral director this year.
- Q: Are the students excited, too?
- R: The students are also very excited about the concert.

- Q: Who are the students?
- R: Maria Astra, Sean Badurina, Allura DeGraw, Jackie Fisher, Jane Hyman, Megan McCormack, Charlene Mullins, Katie Owens, Katie Purcell and Courtney Wissman. Andrew Nagoda and Amy McGinness are alternates.
- Q: Thank you, Miss Phillips, for the interview. Good luck with the concert!

You are Invited to a Birthday Party for Dr. Seuss!



Thursday, March 5, 2009
6:00—7:30 P.M.
RJK Middle School Cafeteria

Letters to the Editor



“LETTERS” POLICY
We welcome your letters and ask that you include your name and homeroom.
We reserve the right to correct errors in grammar and spelling.

Dear Editor,

One way that I can improve my school community is by joining more clubs. If there are no clubs that I am interested in joining, I can try my hardest to get more school clubs formed that students my age would be interested in.

Another way that I can help my school community is when I see students or teachers throwing away paper or other objects that could be recycled, I can kindly ask them to recycle them.

One other way I can see that would help our school is by having people sign a paper promising to help improve and support our school community. All you need are a couple of signed names.

- Selina Feliciano

Dear Editor,

I think that we can improve our school's appearance. In the spring, we could grow flowers and plant new trees. Plant the flowers in the

front of the school. Plant the new trees where stumps of the old cut-down trees are, especially over by the high school.

We can invite groups of kids in the spring who would love to do this in order to make our school a more attractive place to come to, a place for kids to be proud to come to, a place where kids would actually enjoy coming and saying, “This is my school, and I love it!”

- Elizabeth Cutler

Donate “Pennies for Patients” During Red Cross Drive

By Staff

The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society provides funding to help families pay for charges associated with the diagnosis and treatment of children with leukemia. The average total cost to a family having to pay these charges is \$21,255.00.

The RJK Middle School Red Cross Club has teamed up with other schools and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in a campaign called “Pennies for Patients.”

From February 23 to March 13, the members of the RJK Red Cross Club will be going to each homeroom to

collect money from students, teachers, aides, administration and staff.

This money will go directly to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to assist families, such as the family of Faith Karla Swanson from Red Hook, N.Y.

Faith was born on May 18, 2002, and was diagnosed with leukemia in May of 2006, only two weeks after she turned 4. Faith goes to Albany Medical Center for monthly treatments. Faith has been an inspiration to many. Her family's motto is “Keep the Faith.”

Zachary Dylan Fitzgerald from Ballston Lake, N.Y., was diagnosed with leukemia when he was just three years old. After being diagnosed repeatedly with a “summer virus,” his parents demanded further testing. That night they were told to go to Albany Medical Center where Zachary was given his first blood transfusion. His surgery was the next day. That was the day their lives changed.

Not all leukemia patients are diagnosed when they are very young.

Please donate to this worthy cause.

Family Reading Night Will Celebrate “A Multicultural Festival of Books” on March 5 by Staff

The RJK Literary Club is making plans to celebrate another exciting Family Reading Night Birthday Party for Dr. Seuss on Thursday, March 5. It will be held from 6 to 7:30 P.M. in the middle school cafeteria.

This year's theme is “A Multicultural Festival of Books.” There will be entertainment, a big birthday party to honor Dr. Seuss, with Mr. Genas again playing the Cat in the Hat, refreshments, and tables of activities and games.

The PTA's Scholastic Book Fair will be there with all the new books.

Marina Lombardi, our special guest author, will be signing her book, *It's My Divorce Too: Divorce from a Child's Perspective*. Marina is a Monticello High School junior.

Family Reading Night coincides with the National Read Across America Celebration.

Every child and young adult is given a raffle ticket at the door that is good for a special prize, either a book, or a book-related item.

This is the eleventh Family Reading Night held at the RJK Middle School. Don't miss the fun!



PANTHER SPORTS NEWS

Spunky Girls' Modified Basketball Team members strike a pose for the camera.



Monti Panthers, Go!



Boys' Modified Basketball Team members and their coach look cool for posterity.



Panthers' Wrestling Team members celebrate at the awards ceremony.



Panther Wrestling Team News

by Staff

The Panther Wrestling Team won 6 bouts and tied 3 in their match against Warwick and Ellenville on Tuesday, February 10, according to Head Coach Hoar.

Jesse Conklin wrestled to a 0-0 draw.

Chris Maroldi wrestled to a 2-2 draw.

Mason Solberg wrestled to a 4-4 draw.

Michael D'Abbraccio won by a 3-0 decision.

Alex "The Rock" Rokicki came from behind to win a 7-5 decision.

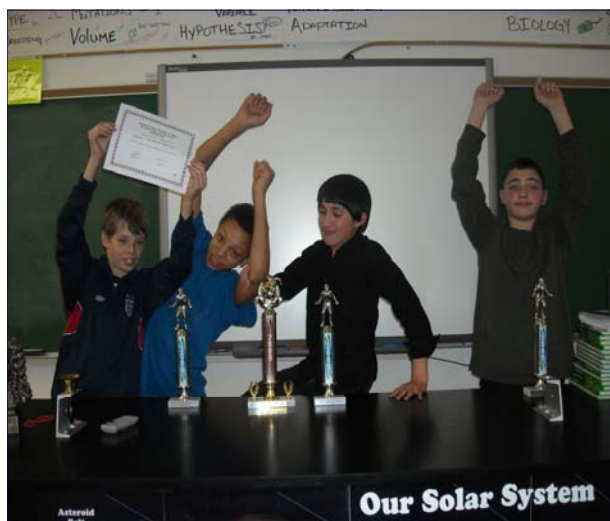
Jocarr Freijo won by a pin in 1:44.

Mistah Alli pinned his opponent in 35 seconds.

Brandon Cuadrado had the fastest pin of the match when he stopped his opponent in 26 seconds.

Louis Torres earned the Outstanding Wrestler of the Match award with a pin in 2:18.

Mr. Robert Keesler is the Panther Wrestling Team's



Assistant Coach.

The Panther Wrestling Team handed out its end-of-season awards on Wednesday, February 11.

Robert Takourian won the Fastest Pin of the Year trophy.

Alex Rokicki was named the Scholar Athlete of the team.

Andrew Benskie was voted by his teammates as the Most Dedicated Wrestler of the Year and the Outstanding Wrestler of the Year.

Chris Maroldi was given the Coaches Award by Coach Keesler and Coach Hoar.

Nick Fiore was voted by his teammates as the Most Improved Wrestler of the Year.

Congratulations to the award winners and to the entire team and their coaches.

Great season, guys! You can be proud of your team!

An Inside View

The Monticello Panthers Girls' Varsity Basketball Team!

by Yadira Montes

The Panthers Girls' Varsity Basketball season is almost over. It's going well. Miss Attack, the coach, is cool and tough. She takes basketball very seriously.

I'm the only 8th grader on the team. I'm a starter and a guard with Nyoki Tate, a senior. All the girls are nice. They aren't just like any group of girls. They're supportive, fun and cool.

Mr. Orlan is the assistant coach.

He's also very supportive, just like Miss Attack. Mr. Orlan is really good at shooting baskets. He's more the calm one. It's good to have two coaches who balance each other.

I'm number 13. We might have only won one game, but I have faith in us that we'll win some more. Miss Attack says that one day we'll break the curse of girls not jumping for the ball (LOL). I believe her 110%. We're going to win some games, and one of

these days before the season is over, I'm going to get Player of the Week.

My sister, Yami Reyes, is the team's manager!

Everything is so new to me, but I'm adjusting to it.

Miss Attack loves it when she sees hustle. She always says, "You can always make up for a mistake with hustle."

I wish the team good luck with the rest of our season!

In Memoriam

**Eugene “Gene” Nesin
(1942—2009)**

***A School Board Member
For More Than 30 Years***

**A friend to children,
An advocate for teachers,
We will miss him deeply.**