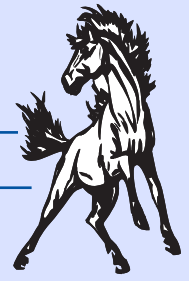


# Mustang Musings

MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

"When you give joy to other people, you get more joy in return." —Eleanor Roosevelt

March/April 2024



## NOTES FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

We're excited to introduce our Attendance Matters Initiative, aimed at addressing chronic absenteeism and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to thrive in their educational journeys. Across the nation, chronic absenteeism has emerged as a significant concern. Recent studies have revealed that absenteeism rates have doubled since our return to in-person learning since the pandemic. But what exactly constitutes chronic absenteeism? A student is considered chronically absent if they miss at least 10 percent of the school year. This equals a minimum of 18 days. It's important to recognize that absences can add up quickly. A student who is absent just **two days a month** misses over 1,000 minutes of critical learning time.

### What We're Doing About It:

- ✳ Making calls home if students are not present at the start of the school day.
- ✳ Refining the use of restorative practices to help students better connect.
- ✳ Reviewing absenteeism data throughout the school year to assess our progress.

### Four Ways You Can Help Your Student Thrive:

- ✳ **Maintain a Consistent Schedule:** Establishing a regular routine, including consistent wake-up times and bedtime, can significantly contribute to your student's overall well-being and academic success.
- ✳ **Emphasize the Importance of School Attendance:** Have open conversations with your student about the value of attending school regularly and the impact it has on their future opportunities.
- ✳ **Connect with a Trusted Adult:** Build meaningful connections between your student and a trusted adult at school. Whether it's a teacher, counselor, or mentor, having a supportive figure can make a world of difference in your student's educational journey.
- ✳ **Prioritize Punctuality:** Make every effort to ensure that your student arrives at school on time. Punctuality not only sets a positive tone for the day but also maximizes valuable learning time.

By working together to prioritize attendance, we can create an environment where every student feels supported, empowered, and equipped to excel academically. Together, let's make attendance a priority and pave the way for a brighter future for our students.

—Ms. Jenna Turner, Dean of Students



## LOBBY DAY

In February, Mr. Harmer took several students to Albany for a day of lobbying for School Based Health Zones. They were able to go with students from Edmeston as well. Through this experience students learned a ton about how they can help change or influence their communities. *Tatiana McAdams*, a senior, said, "I learned a lot from Lobby Day. For one, our representatives aren't as scary as I thought. And two, they're normal people like us, just trying to do their job and be the best they can. It is important for students to use their voices because we have a first hand experience and different perspective than adults with certain problems. Lastly, my favorite part had to be walking around and viewing the beautiful architecture . . . with a Dunkin Caramel Craze Latte."



**Morris Central School  
Board Members**

Mary Dugan, President  
Russell Tilley, Vice President  
Emily Boss

Teresa DeLaurentiis  
Wendy Moore

**Morris Central School  
Administration**

Jamie Maistros, Superintendent  
Katharine Smith, Interim Principal  
April Vunk, Instructional Support  
and Student Success Leader

**Main Office (607) 263-6100  
Guidance (607) 263-6116**

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**NEW  
WEBPAGE**

[www.morriscsd.org](http://www.morriscsd.org)

*You may have noticed MCS has  
a new webpage. Please check it out.  
It is full of important and useful  
information.*

**THREE CHEERS FOR**

- \* Mrs. Maistros and Mrs. Vunk for sweeping snow off our cars on one particularly snowy afternoon in January.
- \* Our administrators for their warm greetings each morning.
- \* Mr. Thom for his hard work at keeping our servers safe and keeping us up-to-date on all things technology.
- \* Mr. Tol and Mr. Utter for setting up the flats and getting the stage ready for our “Shrek Jr.” Musical in March.
- \* Julia Barrett for doing an excellent job helping in the Pre-K room and at Scotty’s.
- \* The National Honor Society members for all their many hours of community service so far.
- \* Jason Valentine And Johnny LaTour for creating and donating prizes for the 9th Annual Coyote Hunt held in January.
- \* Mrs. Forester for being an integral part in getting six young people their lifetime hunting licenses.
- \* The MCS teachers who take student teachers to ensure the quality of education for future students.
- \* Mrs. Waffle’s Juniors and Seniors for being awesome.
- \* The Booster Club for making senior nights special for the athletes.



*On Saturday, February 3, 2024, two MCS students had the honor of participating in the 22nd Daily Star Regional Spelling Bee. Kendall Gould, 7th grade and Rowan Schoellig, 5th grade. Both students did an amazing job and should be extremely proud of themselves. You’ll also notice our own Mary Dugan, MCS Board President, hosting the annual event.*

**SPELLING BEE**

The School Bee and Junior Bee were held at Morris Central School on December 15, 2023. The junior bee included third and fourth grade and the School Bee included fifth Grade top three finishers. The top three finishers for the Junior Bee were *Mary Tabone*, *Piper Sherwood*, with *Fiorenza Burdick* in first place. For the School bee, *Rowan Schoellig* won 3rd place and *Paige Sherwood* won 2nd place, both are Fifth Grade students. The winner of the spelling bee was *Kendall Gould* of 7th grade.

The top two finishers were given the chance to represent our school in The Daily Star Regional Bee. Unfortunately, *Paige Sherwood* could not attend so *Rowan Schoellig* was sent as an alternate. Neither *Kendall* or *Rowan* qualified for the national Spelling Bee in Washington, DC, both students enjoyed the experience.

—Noah Moore, Senior

## AWARD WINNER



Congratulations to *Kiarra Walker*, Freshman, for earning an Honorable Mention in the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest, sponsored by SUNY Oneonta's Office of Equity and Inclusion. The Honorable Mention is in recognition for her outstanding contribution and thoughtful reflection on the impact of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy on her community. Dr.

Chelsea McCracken, the Interim Director of the Center for Racial Justice and Inclusive Excellence at SUNY Oneonta said, "We were impressed by *Kiarra's* submission to the MLK Essay Contest." Congratulations, *Kiarra!* MCS is proud of you!

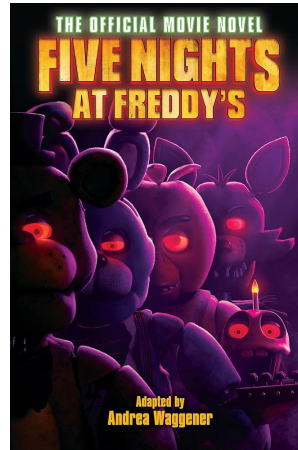


## CUBING

It was his first competition, he started cubing just before Christmas. This event was held by World Cubing Association (WCA) the events name was Empire State Winter 2024, there were 90 competitors, 10 different style cube events, all ages compete against one another. *Liam* competed in two events, in 3x3 he averaged 1:01 for 5 solves with a best time of 44.10 seconds. In 2x2 he was well above his practice average where he was in the 5-7 second range during practice. *Jake Gould* also went, he has been cubing a little longer than *Liam* and had some great times as well. Maybe reach out to his parents for some of his info.

All together they made new friends, had fun learning to be judges and look forward to the next event. If anyone is interested in learning how to speed cube, feel free to ask him how to get started!

## THE FIVE NIGHTS AT FREDDY'S OFFICIAL MOVIE NOVEL: A SO-SO ADAPTATION OF A PRETTY GOOD MOVIE



After years and years of waiting, the Five Nights at Freddy's (PG-13) movie finally hit theaters in October of 2023, to a fair amount of financial success and audience enjoyment, along with a much lesser degree of critical success. I found the movie enjoyable, but this is not meant to be a film review, I'm here to review the quality of its novel adaptation. The original screenplay was written by director Emma

Tammi, Seth Cuddleback, and series creator Scott Cawthon. The screenplay was adapted into novel form by Andrea Waggener, who has written many shorter stories for the two different horror anthology series under the Five Nights at Freddy's brand, *Fazbear Frights* and *Tales From the Pizzaplex*. Considering all of Waggener's previous works on the series, it would stand to reason that she knows her stuff when it comes to the Five Nights at Freddy's series, right? Kind of, but not really.

In my opinion, the best kind of novel adaptation of any sort of media, or this can be applied to any piece of work being adapted into a different medium, is if it adds worthwhile insights or interpretations you could not get from its original form. In the sake of fairness, I admit, the novelization makes an attempt at this. Side characters in the movie with very little screen time have their personalities, backgrounds, and dynamics with other characters fleshed out in a way that wouldn't have been possible in the movie's one hour and 50 minute run time. Granted, these are given to characters that are fodder for Freddy and the gang to hunt down in the first 30 minutes or so, making the development feel somewhat wasted. Compounding this issue with a multitude of inconsistencies between film and novel which feel like they get worse as the novel goes on. It all results in a somewhat unsatisfying read. I'm not going to list these inconsistencies for the sake of not sounding rude or pedantic, but they're obvious if one has recent memory of the movie.

Overall, if you're a fan of Five Nights at Freddy's, there's still some enjoyment that can be had from reading the novel, but it lacks much merit outside of that.

—*Mason Linton*, Junior



## IT IS ALMOST TIME TO GRADUATE

It is almost time for the Class of 2024 to graduate, and it sure has not been easy for them. Senioritis is a real thing. Seniors just can't wait to cross the stage, receive their diplomas, but they sometimes slack on meeting their deadlines and many face intense workloads. *Dominique Cruz* ('24), along with many other seniors, agreed deadlines are the hardest part of their senior year: application deadlines, scholarship deadlines, and survey deadlines just to name a few. *Yana King* ('24) said that "Juggling my outside activities and school is difficult as there is so much more busy work this year when applying for scholarships." *Lillian Johnston's* ('24) biggest struggle is her internal doubt of graduating; sometimes senioritis gets the best of you and you definitely do not want to fall behind.

*Rachel Hill* ('24) added that "The class load this year is a lot heavier than my junior year, so finding the right balance between school work and home time has been a struggle." Home time is valuable as a senior as you will soon move off into the adult world, either entering the workforce or attending college.

Choosing the right college is a very hard thing to do if you do not already have your mind set to one specific place. *Jessica Walling* ('24) has a top five list of schools that she has to narrow down to one school by at least March. For many, deciding can be a problem, either because of tuition costs, how far away the college is, the campus ratings, how the programs are ranked, or the community the college is located in. Along with not knowing what college they may want to attend, deciding between college and the workforce is also a struggle. Many of the seniors are undecided on their majors and what career path they want to take.

One word of advice to the senior class is that we are all still so young. We have time to change our major as many times as needed, allowing us to take different paths in deciding our future. So, as seniors, we must remember that while it seems daunting to us now, we still have room for improvement and personal growth.

—Aislinn Ray, Senior



At the end of each quarter we celebrate students who are on Honor Roll, High Honor Roll, or Principal's List. The first quarter students were treated to cookies. This quarter, they had rootbeer floats.



Sawyer King hosted a free will donation meal at the Episcopal Church in February to help him raise money for his Eagle Scout project. His project will help improve the drainage around the Parish Hall as well as redesign the landscape around the building.



PreK learned to determine whether a story is real or make-believe. We read *The Gruffalo* and decided the beast is make-believe!

# MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL 2ND QUARTER • 2023-2024

## HONOR ROLL

### 7th GRADE

*Aomi Brasseur-Longcor  
Michael Coffyn  
Keenan Hoyt  
Christopher Kara  
Matthew Smith*

### 8th GRADE

*Aniya Kogut  
Chloe Ross*

### 9th GRADE

*Josiah Dugan  
Nathan Gregory  
Hailie Lindberg  
Jason Valentine  
William Weber*

### 10th GRADE

*Natalie Barley  
David Holt  
Shiloh Jones*

### 11th GRADE

*Delaney Coveny  
Zeithan Dunham  
Marc Hoyt*

*Georgia Kolka*

*Brooke McKinney*

### 12th GRADE

*Lorissa Johnston  
Maiya King  
Carter Tuttle  
Casey Tuttle*

## HIGH HONOR ROLL

### 7th GRADE

*Jordan Ard  
Landen Atcher  
Noah Baldo  
Kristena Barringer  
Hailie Brown  
Aubree Canfileld  
Tomas Fernandez  
Mark Johnson  
Kendolyn McEntee  
Peyton Richey  
Blailyn Wilson  
Allison Wood*

### 8th GRADE

*Marjorie Ostroff  
Delilah Triolo*

### 9th GRADE

*Kara Hand  
Hayden Kolvik  
Johnathan LaTour  
Lucas Waffle  
Kiara Walker  
Timothy Wood*

### 10th GRADE

*Ryland Boss  
Hailey Canfield  
Luis Cruz  
Katrina Romano  
Ty Turner  
Grace Wing*

### 11th GRADE

*Leah Gregory  
Emmy Lentz  
Mason Linton  
Levi Waffle*

### 12th GRADE

*Chase Burlison  
Haylee Cole  
Maddie Coleman  
Samantha Coyle  
Sean Dill  
Asa Dugan  
Keegan Fraser  
Rachel Hill  
William King  
Jacob Morlock  
Aislinn Ray  
Tiger Ross*

## PRINCIPAL'S LIST

### 7th GRADE

*Sierra Coyle  
Ethan Fallon  
Brenan Fraser  
Kendall Gould  
Charles Kolka  
Aurora Kopp  
Hannah Moore  
Bryden Wyckoff*

### 8th GRADE

*Julia Barrett  
Kylee Canfield  
Brodren Connally*

*Alanna Davies  
Richard Pegg  
Samuel Schiller*

### 9th GRADE

*Savannah Coyle  
Lainey Fraser  
Jacob Johnson  
Jacob Knapp  
Ella Moore  
Matthew Schiller*

### 10th GRADE

*Jonah Baldo  
Zackary Chase  
Brodie Coleman*

*Alisandra Farmer  
Robert Hill  
Ryan Murphy  
Amira Ross  
Michael Saggese  
Carter Swayer*

### 11th GRADE

*Makenzie Hoyt  
Sera Lentz  
Madison Moore  
Ethan Nisius  
Grace Schiller  
Hannah Wist*

### 12th GRADE

*Dominique Cruz  
Ethan Herring  
Tatiana Ives  
Magdalena King  
Kaylee Kolka  
Tatiana McAdams  
Noah Moore  
Everett Pondolfino  
Jessica Walling  
Reed Wolfe  
Max Yaeger*

## THE LEARNING DOESN'T STOP

Education doesn't stop at twelfth grade at MCS. Faculty, Staff, and Administrators continue their education all year long, every year.

A few teachers are taking a course through BOCES with Cait Dates. They meet once a month to participate in facilitated discussions about the book *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics, Grades K-12: 14 Teaching Practices for Enhancing Learning* by Peter Liljedahl. Participants read three chapters per month and meet on Zoom to discuss the practices learned in the chapters. This book is generating a great deal of excitement in math education! It is based on years of research done by the author in hundreds of classrooms. The author outlines the strategies that they found to have the greatest impact on students' thinking while they are in class vs. just mimicking or being passive learners. Ms. Callea said, "It is nice to collaborate with others throughout our ONC BOCES." See the photo of "Building Thinking Classrooms" sketchnote that shows the 14 elements that they studied.

The Liberty Partnership Program staff participated in a Youth Mental Health First Aid training.

Eileen Hartnett said in February she "started a 'Project Based Teaching' (PBT) course that meets by Zoom for four sessions in February and March. The focus is to create a learning environment in which every student has a voice and the skills to tackle future challenges. The assigned readings are from, *Project Based Teaching: How to Create Rigorous and Engaging Learning Experiences* by S. Boss and J. Larmer are excellent. Because the learning process and skill level of my students is diverse, I'm looking for multiple ways to meet my students where they are academically. Hopefully, PBT is another tool to help reduce the educational gap for my students."

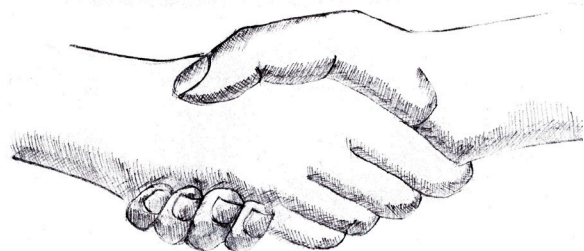
Many teachers worked with Brian DeBoyace to learn news technology or become experts on apps and programs our school has licenses to use. Mrs. Waffle said that she "had interesting conversations about Artificial Intelligence and how students might use it rather than abuse it in class."

Julene Waffle attends writing classes and workshops all year long. Her most recent craft talk, which she helped organize for a world wide Zoom event through Bright Hill Literary Center, was with Ellen Bass, a prominent poet. Over the summer she attended a workshop with prominent Irish poet Paul Muldoon who now resides near Sharon Springs.

Our administrators attend conferences and meetings and Principal's Academy often. They learn about what NYS has in store for our budgets, educational law, Regents exams, and current trends in school building administrative practices among many other things.

During a faculty meeting in January all MCS faculty and staff attended a training on how to use NARCAN® in case we ever have to use it to save someone's life who has experienced exposure to fentanyl. It was very informative.

## Partners in Education



### MORRIS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Jenna Turner attended and presented at a multi-day conference in Ohio hosted by The National Council of Teachers of English in November.

Heather Grant has been working with Otsego County Conservation Association, presenting workshops to teachers statewide. The next workshop will be offered at the SUNY Oneonta AJ Read Science Discovery Center on February 10. These workshops focus on bringing Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences (MWEE) into classrooms across New York State. She has been implementing this learner-centered framework in her Environmental Studies Class at MCS for the last four years, and it is now being utilized by Carlena Johnson and JoAnn Fredette's science classes as well. The MWEE framework actively engages students in learning, by bringing real-world experiences about the local watershed into the classroom through outdoor field work and classroom learning. Students will round out the year by engaging in local environmental action projects, including invasive species removal, Earth Day activities and planting pollinators along Calhoun Creek. Morris received a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association for the 2023-2025 school years, to help purchase equipment and conduct field work.

Carlena Johnson has been participating in a Mindfulness Yoga for Educators series through the Catskill Area Teachers Network to learn about mindfulness and yoga for stress relief for both teachers and students.

Heather Grant, Carlena Johnson, Teresa Kane, and Pat Harmer are in the middle of a book study about project-based learning (PBL) through ONC BOCES Model Schools. They are reading the book *Project Based Teaching: How to Create Rigorous and Engaging Learning Experiences* by Suzie Boss. They participate in Zoom meetings to discuss the ideas in the book with other area teachers and how best to implement them in a real classroom setting. The discussions also center around how to think through difficulties that teachers have or may encounter while trying to implement a PBL project in their classroom, such as funds for materials or time for planning.

Several teachers attended a workshop last fall called The Art of Circle Keeping. This training dealt with social-emotional learning and how teachers can use restorative circles in classrooms to advance learning, correct behavior, and recognize students' emotions.

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, Secondary English

# BUILDING THINKING CLASSROOMS

RESEARCH: @pglijedahl  
 SKETCHNOTE: @wheeler\_laura

**1 Begin w/ a Problem**  
 Give a problem-solving task  
 To start:  
 Problems should be  
 engaging  
 non-curricular  
 collaborative  
 ↳ promote talking  
 Later:  
 Problems can be curricular  
 eg textbook problems

**2 Visibly Random Groups**  
 Randomly assigned eg playing cards  
 Daily & in front of students  
 2 or 3 students / group  
 Sit & stand together

**3 Vertical NonPermanent Surfaces**  
 Vertical  
 Erasable  
 WHITEBOARD CHALKBOARD WINDOW  
 1 marker or chalk per group  
 ↳ promotes discussion

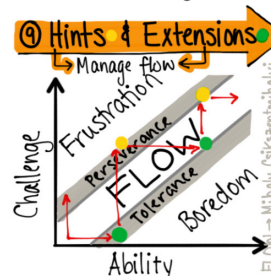
**4 Oral Instructions**  
 give instructions orally  
 Project  
 ↳ data  
 ↳ long expressions  
 ↳ diagrams  
 ↳ groups will discuss (instead of decoding text)

**5 De-front the room**  
 Desks  
 ↳ orient in various directions  
 ↳ pull away from wall (room to stand @VNPS)  
 Teacher addresses the class from a variety of locations.

**6 Answering Questions**  
 Acknowledge, but don't answer:  
 Proximity questions (b/c teacher is close by)  
 Stop thinking questions  
 Answer:  
 Keep thinking questions  
 ↳ give HINTS not answers

**7 Meaningful Notes**  
 Student created:  
 ↳ select  
 ↳ synthesize  
 ↳ reorganize  
 ↳ ideas  
 Based on their & others' boards  
 Provide time for this after levelling.

**8 Build Autonomy**  
 Model how groups can visit other groups when they are stuck or done.  
 Hints & extensions come from peers (not just the teacher).  
 ↳ Helps manage flow



**9 Hints & Extensions**  
 Manage flow  
 ↳ debrief  
 ↳ class discussion  
 ↳ direct teaching the "lesson"  
 Debrief 1 or more groups' solutions!

**10 Level to the Bottom**  
 Once all groups pass a minimum threshold.  
 Work through a new problem w/ whole group

**11 Check Understanding**  
 Assign 4-6 "check for understanding" questions  
 Students choose to work  
 ↳ individually  
 ↳ in groups  
 at desks  
 on VNPS  
 Purpose: self-evaluation (NOT marks)

**12 Formative Assessment**  
 measure → communicate where student is currently  
 ↳ where student is going  
 Multiple & varied opportunities to demonstrate learning  
 observation product conversation  
 can't doesn't isn't dis...  
 fully very completely always

**13 Summative Assessment**  
 PROCESS > product  
 Evaluate what you value!  
 Include:  
 group + individual work

**14 Reporting**  
 Based on data (NOT points)  
 One aggregated mark  
 ↳ disaggregated evidence  
 Analysis of data  
 ↳ Counting of points  
 What has this student learned?  
 What can they improve?

## COMING SOON!

A blood drive will be held in the small gym at Morris Central School on March 4. Donation time slots available range from 1:30 p.m. - 5:45, however time slots fill up quickly. You can secure your time by going to the American Red Cross Blood Drive website, typing in our zip code, and clicking on Morris's blood drive. Any requirements for donating blood can also be found on the Red Cross website.



**All in to help save lives!**



Schedule your blood donation appointment today.

# SENIOR CITIZENS' BRUNCH

Before the Winter Holiday Break, the National Honor Society and Student Council once again served our seniors in this community with a dinner to honor their own kindness and service to our school. Our cafeteria made a delicious pork dinner with all the fixings. Faculty and staff and the cafeteria made many kinds of pies for dessert. While students and faculty and staff served dinner, elementary students songs holiday songs, Mrs. Perkosky's small brass ensemble serenaded senior citizens, faculty and staff sang, and Mrs. Perkosky and Mrs. Thompson played a saxophone and piano duet to entertain seniors during their meal. In addition, the tables were decorated with hand drawn table mats by elementary students and gifts from Mr. Packard's students. Elementary students also decorated the walls of the little gym and Mrs. Waffle's seniors gave each senior citizen a bookmark with an inspirational quotation from Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom.

We are thankful for all the support senior citizens and all community members give to our school and its students!

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, Secondary English





# SECOND SATURDAY COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

*Saturday, February 10th*

*10 a.m. - Noon*

*Zion Church Parish Hall & Magic Closet  
158 East Main Street, Morris*

## *Food items available for community members.*

Organized by Student Voices Student Choices Team members *Rachel Hill, Maddie Coleman, Everett Pondolfino, Aislinn Ray* and *Jessica Walling* with support from MCS Student Council, Morris Rotary, Zion Church, United Methodist Church with funds from the Community Foundation of Otsego County.

# SECOND SATURDAY COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

We are so excited to report that our very first Second Saturday Community Food Pantry was a huge success! We had 22 families complete intake forms and utilize our pantry on Saturday. Our neighbors chose a total of 904 items from our pantry, including our entire stock of fresh milk, eggs, cheese, bread, ham, chicken, carrots, bananas, apples, oranges and Chobani yogurt. Our MCS students did a fabulous job introducing themselves to our neighbors and helping them select items from our pantry. A special thank you to *Michael Wais* and *Mckenzie Rhone* for devoting their entire Saturday morning to helping us with the pantry. It was also great to have Mrs. Maistros and her girls and JoAnn Fredette stop by to see the students in action. We are so grateful for all of your support and donations!

—*Diane Walling* and the *MCS Student Council*

## TECHNOLOGY

### *8th grade Technology*

Technology is for 8th Graders. Technology is a program that is the application of accumulated human knowledge to the transformation of resources through the use of tools for the purpose of meeting human needs or solving problems. In this class, it's full of mostly hands-on activities. Every year he has the students make scissors out of wood, This is one of the first things you make in technology. It uses lots of knowledge and while making the scissors you need to be very safe because you're using very sharp objects to cut scissors out of the wood. "It was fun being able to use so many different tools to make the scissors," said *Broden Connally* ('28).

Every year near Christmas, Mr. Packard has the students make different scents of soaps out of a form that students design on their own. They have to create the design and form out of paper then put it onto a small piece of wood. He does this for a couple of weeks so everyone has a chance to make their own soap. Some students give it to family members as a gift for Christmas. For the past years everyone has loved this project.

"I really like Mr. Packard's class because you can work at your own pace and make things the way you want them," said *Broden Connally* ('28). Mr. Packard said, "The technology class of 2024 is a very fun class this year because the conversations can be outright humorous and sometimes very serious."

—*Kaylee Kolka*, Senior



*Mr. Packard was telling students about one of the machines the students will use to help them create their next projects.*



*Hayden Kolvik, freshman, made this awesome flag in Mr. Packard's Manufacturing class.*

# LEARNING ABOUT TRADES

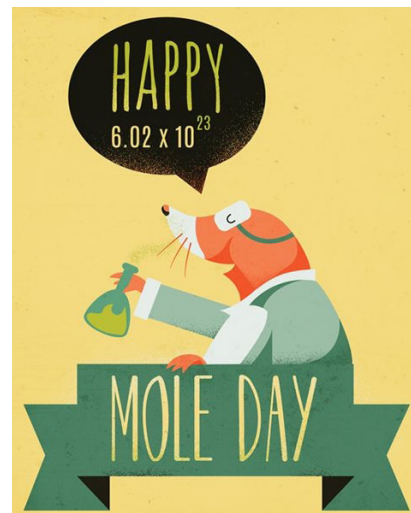
*In February, Fifth Graders visited our local BOCES to learn about the trades they offer training in when they are older.*



## MOLE DAY IN MRS. FREDETTE'S CLASS

Mole Day is celebrated by chemists all over the world on October 23 starting a 6:02 a.m. every year. Mrs. Fredette's students celebrated a bit after the fact, but they still had a good time.

A mole is defined by Wikipedia as "A base unit in the International System of Units." Mrs. Fredette commented, "What is a mole? Ask a chemist this question and the answer might go on for hours." She continued, "Chemists use this number to 'count' atoms." A mole is a collective noun, just like a dozen, a gross, a score, or a baker's dozen. In the case of a mole, or Avogadro's number, it represents a huge number,  $6.022 \times 10^{23}$  (approximately 602 sextillion or 602 billion times a trillion)." What are moles used for? Mrs. Fredette said, "This large number is used to measure very small entities like atoms, compounds or other particles. Since we can't count or see or weigh one atom of let's say carbon, we can hold a mole of carbon atoms in the palm of our hand. We can easily measure the mass of a mole of particles in our lab. This makes it a breeze to mix the correct concentration of a solution or to produce the called for amount of product in a reaction. The mole is a chemists 'pet' unit and what better way to remember it than to create our own pet moles? The students in my chemistry class used their creativity to design a mole mascot, a small stuffed animal that will remind them of why the mole concept is so important in chemistry." In the spirit of learning about the base unit of moles, the Chemistry class created their own creative stuffed moles and named them. The moles will be displayed with their names and the creator's names at the Academic Fair.



Everyone's moles this year were super creative. Every year, Mrs. Fredette sends the students home with directions to make their mole. Within a couple of days, the students of Chemistry must return with their stuffed mole. But, there's a catch. Each mole is preferred to have some sort of decoration or quality that stands out about them, as well as a name with the word "mole" in it. If some students choose to be more creative, they can base their mole off of real people. This year was the first year that a student named one after her.

Here's the list of moles you could see at the Academic Fair this year:

Spidermole—*Brooke McKinney*

Winnie the Mole—*Jackson Ross*

Batmole—*Madison Moore*

Kurt Molebain—*Ben Newell*

Super Molrio—*Kenzie Hoyt*

Moleficen—*Hannah Wist*

Maole Zedong—*Ethan Nisius*

Santmole Claws—*Mason Linton*

Molann Fredette—*Levi Waffle*

—*Tatiana McAdams, Senior*

## FROM THE ART ROOM

I am excited to share the latest happenings from the art room! It's been an incredibly busy and inspiring time working in all kinds of art media.

**Clay Creations in Grades 3-6 and Advanced Art:** Our students have been getting their hands dirty (in the best way possible!) working with clay. From crafting intricate lanterns to adorable turtles and functional mugs, their creativity knows no bounds. It's been wonderful to see them explore the tactile nature of this medium and bring their imaginations to life in three-dimensional form.

**3D Exploration in 9th Grades:** The art room has been abuzz with activity as students dive into the world of three-dimensional art. Building 3D cubes and experimenting with Paper Mache, they've been honing their spatial awareness and fine motor skills while constructing unique and imaginative sculptures.

**Charcoal Drawings in Advance Art:** The allure of charcoal has captivated our high school artists, who have been producing stunning drawings with this versatile medium. From expressive portraits of famous celebrities, they've been delving into the rich textures and tones that charcoal offers, creating

**Pixel Art in 7th Grade:** In the digital realm, our students have been exploring pixel art drawings. Through careful placement of individual pixels on graph paper they have been crafting intricate designs and characters.

I am immensely proud of the dedication and enthusiasm our students have shown in the art room. Their willingness to experiment, take risks, and express themselves creatively is truly inspiring.

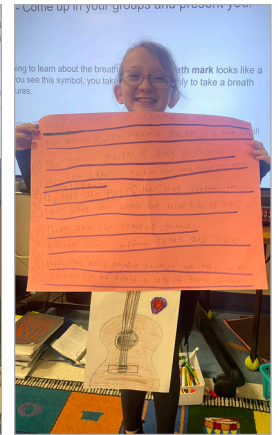
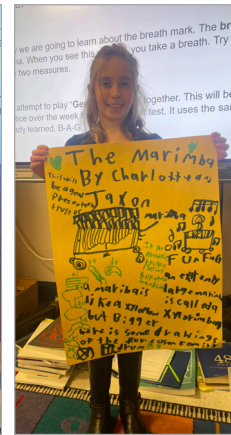
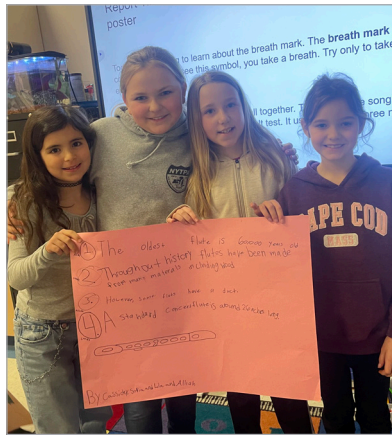
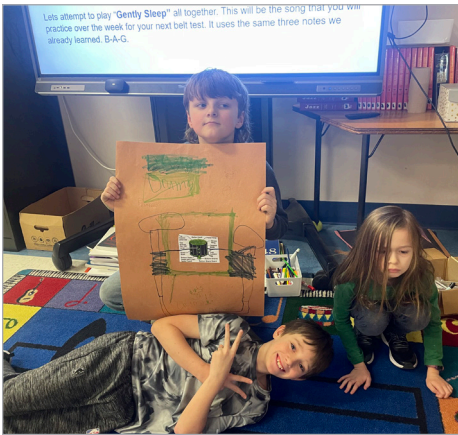
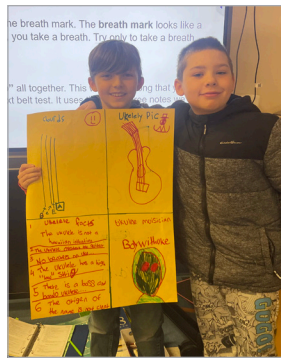
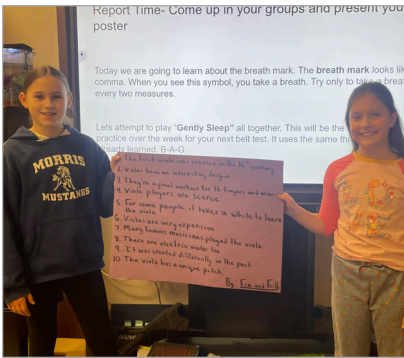
—*Mrs. Beth Collins, Art*

# 4TH GRADE

## Picking Instruments

4th graders learned about instruments they are interested in playing in band next year. They made posters of their interests and presented them to their class. They were hung up outside the chorus room for all to enjoy during February.

—Mrs. Brianne Thompson, Vocal Instructor



# AWESOMENESS AT ALL-COUNTY FESTIVAL #1

A few of our talented musicians were accepted into All-County and had their concert on Saturday, February 3, 2024. All the students were amazing as they sang “Festival Sanctus” (Leavitt), “Omnia Sol” (Stroope), “Ain’t That Good News” (Dawson), “Seize the Day” (Emerson) and played “Pinnacle” (Grice) “Eagle Crest” (Swearingen) and “Emblazoned” (Balmege).

### Senior Chorus:

- Brodie Coleman, Tenor
- Maddie Coleman, Alto
- Rachel Hill, Soprano
- Everett Pondolfino, Bass

### Junior Band:

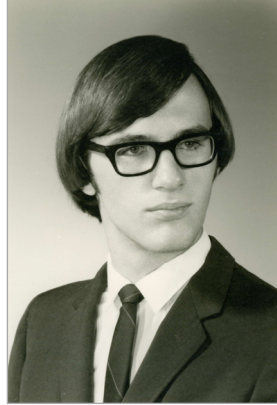
- Ricky Pegg, Tuba
- Matt Schiller, Trumpet
- Sam Schiller, Bass Clarinet
- Lucas Waffle, Trumpet
- Owen Wagner, Alto Saxophone



## MUSIC DEPARTMENT NEWS

### *Donation to the Music Department*

Have you ever looked forward to the last day of school when you can finally see your photo in the yearbook? The burning moment when you get to see yourself change after another year. Well, Donald Valentine did not get the opportunity to see his picture because at the time long hair was not accepted like it is today. When Don Valentine graduated, it was important to school officials that their gentleman students had traditional short haircuts. At the time, Mr. Valentine had long hair that sometimes dropped over his eyes. Even though that was an apparent style during the time period, Donald's photo, along with a few other young gentlemen's photos were excluded from the book because they chose to keep their hair long. Even though he was not in the yearbook his senior year, he still held a big spot in everyone's heart who knew him. He was described as a gentleman, or more like a gentle man by his wife, Jean Valentine.



Jean and Donald met at a print shop in Sidney in 1987. She said, "He was wonderful" and was truly "my best friend." "He was the most easy going person I ever knew," said Jean. Don had a love for animals of all sorts. He also had a great interest in hot rods. Jean said he loved to build them and just acknowledge their beauty. However, Don's longest love was music.

He was first introduced to music when he was young. It developed into his ability to play the trombone and bass guitar which were his favorites. He loved big bands and Rock and Roll Music. The Beatles and Paul McCartney were a big hit for Donald, and he would find peace in their music. His love for music, helped Don start a band. With many others in the community they came together to name it the Synthetic Rainbow which would later become The Unknowns. Many members of our community still remember listening to their

music. Don carried his love of the arts into his work life too, as he painted signs as a graphic artist for some time.

Jean's life would take an unexpected turn when she was diagnosed with breast cancer during her time with Don.

He chose to stop playing music until she fought through her battle with breast cancer. After she made it through chemo, Don slowly returned to music. Jean believes that Donald's love for music came from the ability to have something of his own. He was a twin, and as Jean said, "His twin never took music as seriously as Don." Don found great pleasure in knowing music was his own personal interest.

Don passed away recently, and Jean said, "I miss him every minute of every day." After Donald's death, the whole family came together to celebrate Don's life. Jean chose to donate a couple of

Donald's instruments to the school in hopes of inspiring other kids to partake in music just as Donald did. She donated a Fender Jazz Bass guitar, pbone plastic trombone, trombone stand, and a guitar tuner. When asked why she made the decision to donate the instruments she said "because it is what he would have wanted."

Donald had an instrument for each of his grandchildren, but Joan donated all but his bass which was his pride and joy. Because Don "thought music was important to make a well-rounded person," the goal was "to give a kid, who possibly couldn't have one, an instrument to use and get inspired to play for the rest of their lives."

Both of Donald's children graduated from Morris, and Jean hopes this donation will help Don be remembered in spite of not being in his yearbook. This donation to the music department will ensure Don's positive impact on our MCS future musicians. The department has made a sign in the band room that celebrates this donation.

—Hannah Wist, Junior

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## JAZZED UP OVER JAZZ CHOIR

You might have seen the Jazz Choir perform at a concert already this year, but how the club came about is pretty interesting. After hearing students say, "I wanted to do both chorus and band but needed a study hall in my schedule so I had to choose between the two," Mrs. Thompson decided to start a "club" that meets before school twice a week so that all students (including those not in chorus) can get together and sing and perform in concerts.

Everett Pondolfino, Senior said, "Just like for Jazz Band, students don't receive credit for their time in Jazz Choir

and Mrs. Thompson volunteers her time. What a cool thing for MCS.

They get points for lyre. It's a higher level of repertoire and not a lot of rehearsal time so I only let 7-12 graders participate. It's the same for Jazz Band.

Nope. No compensation and no credit. We just show up early twice a week for the benefit of making good music together and trying a style of music they wouldn't normally do in chorus class."



# January 2024

## Music Department Newsletter

### 4-6 Winter Concert

Join us for an enchanting evening with our hardworking 4th-6th graders as they present a delightful Band and Chorus concert. The performance will feature a charming small play titled "Aunt Rhodie's Appetite," promising laughter and heartwarming moments.

As you enjoy the musical talents of these young performers, immerse yourself in the cozy atmosphere with the comforting vibes of hot chocolate and the spirit of Old Man Winter. It's an evening filled with melody, merriment, and the joy of watching young talents shine.

**Concert Date: January 17, 6:30 PM- Location: Morris Auditorium**

**Congratulations to the following students for being selected to participate in this year's All County Festivals!**



#### All County Festival #1

Saturday, February 3rd

#### Jr. Band, Sr. Chorus

2:00 PM at Edmeston SCD

#### All County Senior Chorus

Maddie Coleman

Brodie Coleman

Rachel Hill

Everett Pondolfino

#### All County Jr. Band

Richard Pegg

Samuel Schiller

Matthew Schiller

Lucas Waffle

Owen Wagner

#### All County Festival #2

Saturday, March 2nd

#### Elementary Band and Chorus All County Elementary Chorus

1:00 PM at Cooperstown CSD

#### Jr. Chorus and Sr. Band

2:30 PM at Cooperstown CSD

#### All County Junior Chorus

Kendall Gould

Hannah Moore

#### All County Sr. Band

Brodie Coleman

Levi Waffle

Jessica Walling

Maggie Bourgeois

AnnaLeen LaTour

Madison Lindberg

Abbigail Raudibaugh

Paige Sherwood

Carter Southard

Jayda Steifel

Savannah Wilson

#### All County Elementary Band

Paris Behnke

Abbigail Connally

Lucas Pope



2024 MORRIS  
MUSTANG DRAMA  
PROGRAM

SHREK  
CAST MEMBER: THE MUSICAL JR.

Please initial next to your name to accept your role.

See Mrs. Thompson or Mrs. Fredette if you have questions or concerns. Thanks for auditioning!!

Our read through and FIRST REHEARSAL is on JANUARY 2 from 3:00PM -5:00 PM!!

STORY TELLERS-

#1: JED DUGAN

#2: DELILAH TRIOLO

#3: ROBERT HILL

SHREK: EVERETT PONDOLFINO

DONKEY: BRODIE COLEMAN

FIONA: MADDIE COLEMAN

TEEN FIONA: HANNAH MOORE

YOUNG FIONA: ANNALEEN LA'TOUR

LORD FARQUAAD: RACHEL HILL

DRAGON: YANA KING

MAMA OGRE: HANNAH MOORE

PAPA OGER: EVERETT PONDOLFINO

LITTLE SHREK: RICHARD PEGG

PINOCCHIO: ROBERT HILL

GINGY: WILLIAM WEBER

PAPA BEAR: SAWYER KING

MAMA BEAR: HAILIE LINDBERG

BABY BEAR: MICKENZIE GOODWIN

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS-

PIG 1: RICHARD PEGG

PIG 2: KENDALL GOULD

PIG 3: KRISTENA BARENGER

UGLY DUCKLING- AUBREE CANFIELD

WICKED WITCH: DELILAH TRIOLO

BIG BAD WOLF: TRYSTIN WORMAN

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD: JESSICA WALLING

KNIGHTS- WILLIAM WEBER, DELILAH TRIOLO,

TRYSTIN WORMAN, JED DUGAN

BISHOP- SAWYER KING

DWARES: JAKOB GOULD

-ENSEMBLE MEMBERS-

GUARDS

ADRIANNA TICE, ASA DUGAN, JED DUGAN

DULOC PERFORMERS

LIAM HOOSOCK, SADIE JACOBY, EDEN BOSS, TESSA

HOOSOCK, ABBY CONNALLY, MICKENZIE GOODWIN,

CARTER SOUTHARD, JAKOB GOULD, ANNALEEN

LA'TOUR, BELLA MARINO

PIED PIPER- TRYSTIN WORMAN

PUSS N' BOOTS: CARTER SOUTHARD

PETER PAN- AISLINN RAY

ROOSTER- CAMERON HARMER

RATS- ABBY CONNALLY, JAYDA STIEFEL,

ALLIAH LEONORD

BIRDS- MADISON LINDBERG, SAVANNAH WILSON,

MONTANA LA'TOUR, BARRETT WILCOX

TREES- ALLISON DIBBLE, ARYANA KOLVIK,

CHARLOTTE WORDON, KELLER BAKER

WOODLAND CREATURES- SIDNEY COYLE,

MARY TABONE, MCKENZIE PEGG, PARIS BEHNKE



# OTHER THINGS OUR STUDENTS ARE DOING OUTSIDE SCHOOL: COMMUNITY THEATER

Community theater is the perfect way for individuals with diverse backgrounds to come together and share their passions for the performing arts. Whether in the spotlight or behind the scenes, theater creates lasting memories and a profound sense of community pride. Some Morris students who have recently shown their love for the stage are *Yana King* ('24), *Everett Pondolfino* ('24), *Maiya King* ('24), *William Weber* ('27), and *Trystin Worman* ('28). *Yana King* ('24) last performed with Orpheus Theatre back in December of 2023 for *The Sound of Music* and is currently in the process of auditioning for *RENT* with Tri-town Theatre. *Everett Pondolfino* ('24) last performed in *RENT* with Orpheus Theatre. *Maiya King* ('24) works backstage on sound for Orpheus Theatre to bring each musical to life. *William Weber* ('27) and *Trystin Worman* ('28) both performed with Orpheus' youth group, Starstruck, in *Shrek, Jr.*

Community theater offers numerous benefits such as fostering creativity, building a sense of community, allowing self-expression, and promoting teamwork. Further boosting confidence, improving communication skills, and offering a unique form of entertainment for both its actors and the audience are also benefits. *Everett Pondolfino* ('24) explains, "Orpheus Theater and the community that has formed around it have been a large part of my life for a long time. They have supported me through tough times, and in many ways have made me who I am." Theater is such an impactful driving force in one's confidence and not only does it challenge a student's performing ability, but it strengthens their adaptability to certain circumstances. All in all, community theater is a wonderful opportunity for students to come together and just have fun.

—*Yana King*, Senior



## CAST

Storytellers.....	Anika Fassler, Liam Solano, Rachel Sperano
Mama Ogre.....	Rebecca Redmond
Papa Ogre.....	William Weber
Little Ogre.....	Jackson Hildebrandt
Shrek.....	Eli Williams
Captain of the Guards.....	Jack Krone
Pinocchio.....	Wyndam Withington
Big Bad Wolf.....	Kaylee Cullen
Little Pigs.....	Natalie Forster Rothbart, Abby Santos, Kyleigh Strong
Wicked Witch.....	Mira Miller-O'Connor
Peter Pan.....	Skylar Gargash
Ugly Duckling.....	Meera Iyer
Mama Bear.....	Rebecca Redmond
Papa Bear.....	William Weber
Baby Bear.....	Lily Brockert
Sugar Plum Fairy.....	Eliza Trass
Donkey.....	Lucia Ellwanger
Lord Farquaad.....	Carter Post
Gingy.....	Owen Meade
Young Fiona.....	Ella Swift
Teen Fiona.....	Luna Rios
Princess Fiona.....	Glenna Plouitz
Puss in Boots.....	Hallie Ruling
Knights.....	Anika Fassler, Liam Solano, Rachel Sperano, Trystin Worman
Dragon.....	Annyah McHugh
Pied Piper.....	Aidan Burlew
Rats.....	Bentley Post, Luna Rios, Hallie Ruling, Ella Swift
Bishop.....	Brennan Burlew
Dwarf.....	Miles Holland
Blind Mice.....	Evin Banes, Romana Popek, Bentley Post
Rooster.....	Jackson Hildebrandt

### Duloc Dancers

Lily Brockert, Anika Fassler, Skylar Gargash, Jackson Hildebrandt, Bentley Post, Hallie Ruling, Luna Rios, Ella Swift

### Farquaad Guards

Aidan Burlew, Brennan Burlew, Lilyrose Chism, Isabel Griswold, Trystin Worman

### Dragon Operators/Skeletons

Isabel Griswold, Mira Miller-O'Connor, Ella Swift, Luna Rios

### Fairy Tale/Woodland Creatures

Evin Banes, Lily Brockert, Aidan Burlew, Brennan Burlew, Lilyrose Chism, Natalie Forster Rothbart, Skylar Gargash, Jackson Hildebrandt, Jack Krone, Miles Holland, Owen Meade, Ramona Popek, Bentley Post, Rebecca Redmond, Abby Santos, Liam Solano, Rachel Sperano, Kyleigh Strong, Eliza Trass, William Weber, Trystin Worman

## MCS STARS SHINE IN ORPHEUS' SHREK THE MUSICAL!

Congratulations to our very own *William Weber* and *Trystin Worman* for their outstanding performances in the Orpheus Production of *Shrek the Musical*! *Will* performed the rolls of Papa Orge, Papa Bear, and a woodland creature while *Trystin* was a knight, a member of Farquaad's guard, and a woodland creature. Their talent and dedication wowed audiences and made us proud. Keep shining, stars!

—*Mrs. Deanna Perkosky*, Instrumental Director



# KINDERGARTEN GINGERBREAD

Kindergartners learned different versions of The Gingerbread Man during December. Not only did they listen to a variety of stories, but they made gingerbread cookies and houses at the end of the month.

—Miss Christine Callea, Kindergarten



# PE CARDIO

*A fun day in PE with Cardio Drums*



# CONGRATULATIONS

## SCHOLAR-ATHLETE TEAM RECOGNITION

Congratulations to all our winter varsity teams for their academic achievements. It is a wonderful accomplishment to have 70% of the team members achieve a GPA of 90 or above. This reflects not only their dedication to their sports but also their commitment to academic excellence.

### *Indoor Track*

This year, Morris athletes decided to try something new by adding Indoor Track as a winter sport! Both Mrs. Rhone and Mr. D'Amico have been amazing and patient coaches this winter as they continue to prepare their athletes for the upcoming spring season. Runners practice their drills in the hallways as the JV girls basketball team kindly shares the gym with the throwers. The team also spends a lot of their time in the school's weight room, where they each guide and support each other in becoming better athletes. Between the months of December and February, the team has traveled to campuses including SUNY Cortland and Ithaca College for their meets. With an attendance of three meets, athletes will continue to do so for the Section IV Class Championships this February. With all kinds of track and field events to compete in, nearly sixteen of MCS's students have shown a successful season. Everett Pondolfino ('24) has gotten four pins for placing in four different meets competing in both boys shot put and boys long jump. Madison Moore ('25) placed second in the Girls 1500 Meter Run on 1/13/24, as well as third place in the Girls 3000 Meter Run within hours of each other. Maiya King ('24) placed second in Girls Long Jump and third in the Girls Triple Jump that same day as well. Although they are too young to compete in the meets themselves, Marjorie Ostroff and Aniya Kogut help keep their teammates on track with the position of team managers. In the spring, the two will participate in the MCS modified spring track and field season. Everett Pondolfino ('24), who participates in several track and field events including boys shot put, said, "For the size of the meets we have been going to, our team has been very successful. I think we will have a phenomenal outdoor season!" As she continues to challenge herself, Madison Moore ('25) said, "Winter track has been a great experience, and I can't wait for this upcoming spring season. I really feel we have come together as a team and can show each other an even more successful season."

—Grace Schiller, Junior



### *Mustangs On The Court*

This basketball season both the girls and boys have been going great. Our girls JV and Varsity teams merged with Edmeston this season. Maddie Coleman ('24) said, "It's been a great experience playing with the friends I have made from Edmeston. This season has been bittersweet to say the least, and I will miss my teammates dearly." The merger has gone pretty smoothly. Unfortunately, our girls missed a Tri-Valley League change for first place.

While our boys JV and Varsity didn't merge, they still had a great season. Keegan Fraser ('24) said, "This season has been extremely exciting and fulfilling on and off the court. The moments in the team room right before the game and the work we did on the court showed the hard work and dedication each team member has put in at practice. I will forever miss this team." The boys played a very exciting game against Edmeston for a chance to win the Tri-Valley League title. The boys won that play off game. In the next newsletter, you will get to read about that Tri-Valley League title match against ----- Overall, the basketball teams have had a lot of success on and off the court.

—Rachel Hill, Senior

## SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN



The Golf Club had an outing on January 21, 2024, after being snowed out on the weekend before. Club members showed up and displayed their passion for the game. One of the members of the club, *Reed Wolfe* ('24) said, "We had a great time playing golf on the simulator with friends." That day we played Superstition Mountain (which in real life is located in Arizona). It was both challenging and fun at the same time.

Here is a fun fact from MCS graduate AJ Puylara who was an intern at Superstition Mountain as when he was earning his undergraduate degree. AJ said that working there "was a blur. We put out 300-500 rounds per day for two golf courses and one golf shop." He didn't have time to "stop and smell the roses too often," but he said it was a beautiful course designed by Jack and Gary Nicklaus (Prospector Course) and Jack and Jack, Jr. (Lost Gold Course). He said, "The proshop

had a large window in the back that overlooked the driving range which faced the mountain. It had absolutely beautiful scenery with Superstition Mountain (which is allegedly haunted). As the sun changed orientation throughout the day, it would expose different textures of the mountain and highlight areas that were within shadows at other times. It never got old seeing it every day."

As for Golf Club, this was the first time playing on the indoor golf simulator since last year for many of the members, and *Levi Waffle* ('23) said, "It was a good excuse to dust off the clubs and play again." Everyone agreed this was a great way to spend their Sunday afternoon and look forward to doing more later on. The next event planned is a trip to the Turning Stone indoor driving range and short game area which everyone is looking forward to.

—*Ethan Herring*, Senior

## HITTING THE SLOPES

By February Ski Club was in full swing. Thanks to the generosity of time by Jen and Carl Morlock, students at MCS are able to have a Ski Club. They have served as Ski Club advisors for a very long time. Each Saturday afternoon, for six Saturdays starting in early January, students ride a bus to Labrador Mountain in Truxton, NY.

Once they arrive, students unload their gear from the Morlock's truck and head for the lodge to check in and slopes to start skiing. New skiers take lessons as well.

Because of his extensive experience on the slopes, *Jacob Morlock*, a senior, often helps new skiers down the mountain. Usually it will take a few minutes to ski down the mountain, but when he takes new skiers, it can sometimes take 45 minutes to an hour. He doesn't mind though. He said, "Ski Club is one of my favorite programs at Morris. You see kids come in for



the first time and be nervous, then as they learn, their confidence grows. By the end of the season, people can't wait for next year to get back on the mountain."

—*Mrs. Julene Waffle*,  
Secondary English

# ALUMNI SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

## *Catching up with an MCS Basketball Legend*

Last year MCS basketball made quite a stir as we had two players score 1,000 points, *Carissa Richards* and *Scott Murphy*. That unusual feat stirred research. Mrs. Waffle, Mrs. Mackey, and especially sports reporter and podcaster Nate Lull and Norwich Athletic Coordinator, Rich Turnbull, went back into old yearbooks and newspapers and league records and conducted interviews to find all the players who had scored 1,000 or more points in their varsity basketball careers at Morris. This year that list is about to grow with *Tiger Ross* reaching the milestone.

*The complete list is as follows:*

### **BOYS:**

- Bryan Gorsira (1,190), Class of 1975
- Rob Joy (1,251), Class of 1987
- Matt Murphy (1,172), Class of 2019
- Scott Murphy (1,090), Class of 2023
- Tiger Ross (still active) Class of 2024

### **GIRLS:**

- Daphne Joy (1,591), Class of 1986
- Catherine Forgit (1,089), Class of 1985
- Kim Kristofik (1,171), Class of 1989
- Abby Matteson (1,397), Class of 1997
- Audra Kristofik (1,025), Class of 1992
- Katie Shearer (1,020), Class of 1995
- Alyson Kristofik (1,018), Class of 2004
- Carissa Richards (1,043) Class of 2023

The conversations and research allowed me to speak with several former MCS athletes. Bryan Gorsira was the first to reach this 1,000-point milestone. Mr. Gorsira was fun to interview, and I am thankful to hear firsthand a unique piece of Morris Central's history.

Today, Bryan Gorsira lives in Warrenton, VA, and is a Wildlife Biologist working for the National Park Service. He will be retiring soon and hopes to visit Morris during MCS' reunion weekend this summer.

**Julene Waffle:** What are your first thoughts when you recall scoring your 1,000th point? What did it feel like? Did your 18-year-old or self understand how cool that was?

**Bryan Gorsira:** I rarely get to talk about those glory days. It was a truly magical time for me, a relatively shy kid, thrust into that small town limelight. Here's the thing: I am not sure I even realized that I was the first to score 1,000 in Morris, or maybe I have simply forgotten.

I looked through all the old newspaper clippings that my mom, thankfully, saved and found the article. My memory of that game was more about the fact that I had scored 50 points earlier that year, and the crowd



and/or cheerleaders were chanting for me to break the record again. I think I could have hit 60, but our coach was from a different mindset than now, and part of me appreciates his sportsmanship. Of course, the selfish part of me wished he had let me continue. So when I hit 45, he took me out of the game just as he had when I scored 50 and broke the 48 point record earlier in the season. And so, I remember that game for different reasons than scoring 1,000. I guess I didn't understand how cool that was.

**JW:** You broke Dick Ryther's 48-point game record. He was the son of a former MCS superintendent and was a heck of a basketball player I have been told. Can you tell us about setting that record of a 50-point game?

**BG:** I have some vivid memories of the first 50-point game. I remember being really tired. Shooting is pretty hard work really. And I remember (or my memory of it) our coach: Mr. Moriarity had to put in our outstanding guard, Kevin Collier, to help me break the record, as maybe because of nerves, I was having trouble getting another basket. He was an outstanding passer and had a talent for being able to anticipate where I would be to get open, and bam—the ball was there. I think I was better at getting open and shooting than creating shot opportunities on my own, but my memory is sketchy.

**JW:** Do you recall having a favorite game in your high school basketball career?

**BG:** That's a tough one, especially after all these years. I do remember one game at the Christmas tournament, where everything I touched seemed to go in. That was fun. Happened more frequently while practicing, but never in a game before or since. I think maybe the game that stuck in my head the most was against New Berlin in sectionals. We had lost to them twice during league play. And in large part I blamed myself for those losses. I was always pretty self-critical. And so at half time

I recall talking to my good friend, Guy Birdsall, and just telling him that we will not lose to them again, and he just needed to get the rebound and throw it and I'd be down the court.... or something like that. I just remember really having that conviction of "No, this will absolutely not happen again."

**JW:** What other fond memories might you have?

**BG:** I, of course, have many fond memories. Things that really stick out are compliments that just totally took me by surprise. A tall and large coach from a rival team (Edmeston) came into our locker room after a game and walked over to me. No one ever did that and it scared the heck out of me and others, I am sure. He came over and just said, "You played one heck of a game" or something like that and walked out. I also remember the first newspaper article I was in. It was from a JV game, and at that time, JV teams were never in the paper. It was a small bit that said something like "But the story of the night was the performance put on by Bryan Gorsira, as he poured in 43 points for the Junior Mustangs." I remember grabbing my parents saying "Holy! Look at this!"

**JW:** What did you do in the off season to improve your game?

**BG:** This will seem like an exaggeration, but one summer in particular, before summer jobs, every day, all day, I walked up to school and shot hoops, walked home for lunch, and then went back up. I was truly obsessed. And my memory of it wasn't that I was driven to be better, but that I just loved the motion of the sport. When slightly younger, I would play for hours in our basement putting a small ball in between two parallel water pipes that were slightly above my head, with a loud "clump" each time. I am forever grateful for my parents' patience. That had to be annoying. So I had no formal dedicated off season stuff besides a couple of weeks of basketball camp and playing pick up games at school. There was so much talent at that time; it really made us all better just doing pickup games.

**JW:** What was it like for your town to have such a successful team?

**BG:** It was a nice time for the town as well as us players. We had the MVP of the league four years in a row, with me being the first two-time MVP, first as a forward, next year as a guard. So we had quite a run of good teams. Our record JV-Varsity was 69-10.

**JW:** For young players—do you have advice?

**BG:** That's a tough one, isn't it? I would say this to young athletes: Enjoy it and appreciate it. I remember early on talking to my dad, saying many many times, "I will never complain as I get older because of what this body is able to do. It truly is a blessing, not everyone gets to experience this." It was always a bit of a third person

thing for me, like "Wow, I didn't know that my body could do that!" Maybe other advice would be to keep in mind why you are going to college. Enjoy the sport, of course, I did for decades, but know it will probably not be where you end up. And a last recommendation: In my opinion, it's better to be a player in Division III than sitting on the bench in Division I.

**JW:** Did you ever coach?

**BG:** I never coached. Neither my stepson nor daughter played, and I didn't want to force that upon them. In a nutshell my basketball history was this: After high school, I went to a Division III school (Cortland—should have gone to Oneonta in hindsight, better coach), with goals of going to Division I. I made varsity as a freshman but got hurt, so I left college. I went into the Coast Guard and was asked to play, but my friend nicely asked me, "Bryan, is that why you joined?" It was a good question; it was not why I joined. Then I went to a small school in Maine (NAIA), not intending to play, but a small scholarship was available, so I played. The team was not good, but I did well enough to finish in the top 10 in the state in scoring and rebounding each year. I scored 1,000 points there too. The newspaper articles from that time said I was a pure shooter. I never really understood what that meant, but I understood it as a compliment. Anyway, I really wasn't into it as much as I was in high school. Then in grad school, I played intramural ball at TX A&M. I was getting older at that point, so I didn't play the A league but rather the B. That was kind of the end of basketball for me, I was in my mid-30's by then and my body was starting to break down.

**JW:** Do you have anything to do with sports today?

**BG:** I still shoot once in a while in my driveway. Shot still works, but my movement is lacking just a bit—ha! I still find it fun! And that's the bottom line. Basketball was just so much fun! I played tennis for a while, but now the only sport I dabble in is golf.

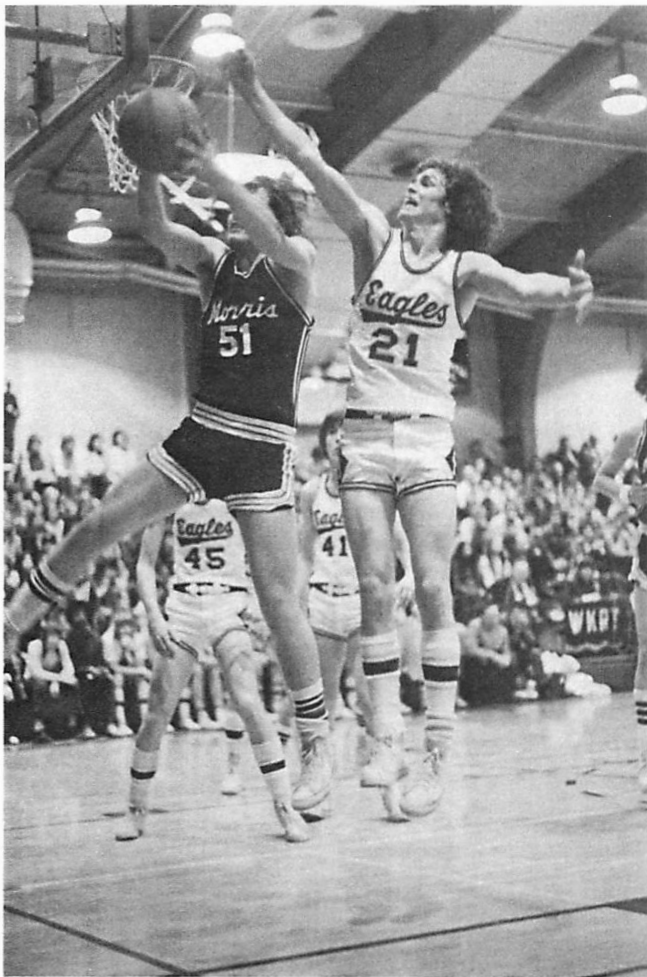
**JW:** There are not many photos of you playing ball, but you sent me a few you had. Can you speak to them?

**BG:** I played before the digital age, so sadly pictures are few. Most of what I have are from my sophomore year.

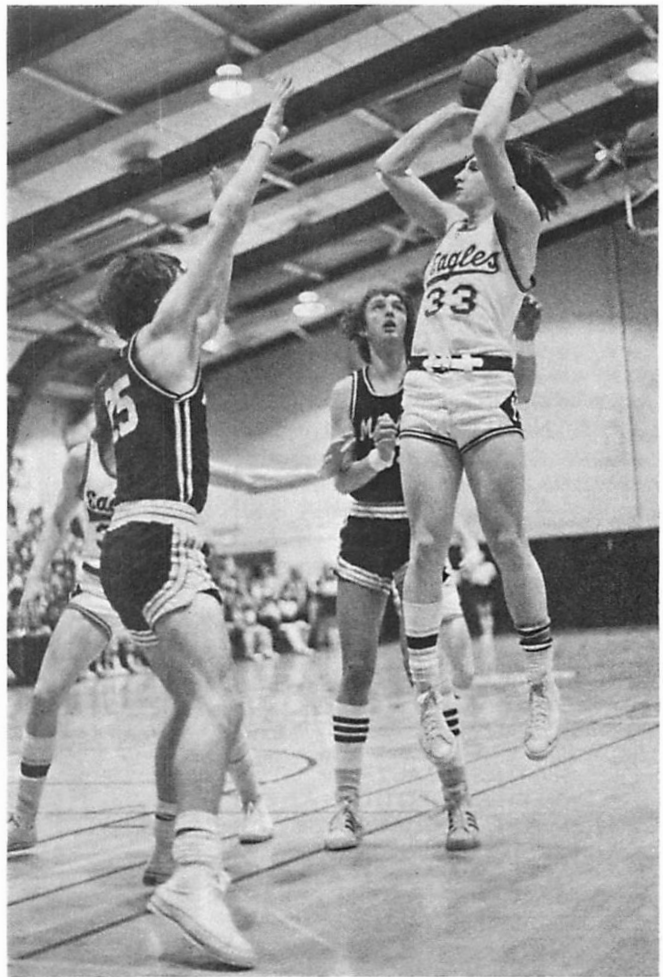
The picture of me passing (at the beginning of the article) is from The Oneonta Star. It is probably my favorite picture that I have of myself playing. It is from the Ray Clement Christmas Tournament. The one of me closer to the basket was from a magazine called Southern Tier Sports World and was a sectional game, and in the other I was as a sophomore from a yearbook photo.

**JW:** Do you have any other last things you would like to say?

**BG:** I would like to congratulate those other 1,000 point players! Well done, and welcome to the club!



Guy Birdsall snatches a rebound away from McGraw's Mike Abbatiello (21).



Mike Mowry launches two of his 14 points, ignoring the defense of Dave Wilbur (25) and Brian Gorsira.

McGraw came out smoking in the third period, as Abbatiello scored two buckets in a row to tie it at 34, and Terry Berean got four of his seventeen with 5:56 left to give the Eagles their biggest lead of the night, 42-38. Morris closed to within 42-41 on a Wilbur baseline drive, but when Dave failed to convert the free throw that went along with Berean's third foul, Berean banked one in and Abbatiello took a fast-break pass from brother Mike to put the Eagles on top, 46-41. Gorsira then got hot for the Mustangs, scoring six of his team's final ten points to close the gap to 52-51 at the end of period three.

Scott Kjelgaard converted a layup to open the fourth period and give McGraw a 54-51 lead, but then the roof fell in. First, Cole hit to cut the gap to one, was fouled on the play, missed the free throw, but saw Wilbur convert the rebound to give Morris their first lead since the 6:44 mark of period three. Guy Birdsall, who wound up with ten points, as did Matt Dugan for the winners, then missed the front end of a one-and-one, but Wilbur was fouled on the rebound, and he put in two to make it 57-54, Morris. Gorsira then tossed in a fifteen-



Leading scorer Brian Gorsira drops in two of his 27 points, beating McGraw's Lou Mowry (15) and Mark Abbatiello on the play.

footer, and Cole dropped in two more to give the Mustangs a string of ten unanswered points and a 61-56 lead. McGraw then called time and went to a full-court press, but with disastrous results. Gorsira put in a jumper from the baseline, then hit the first of two free throws to make it 64-56. When he missed the second, Dugan was there to put in the rebound for two more, and then Wilbur stole the ball and drove the length of the court for an insurmountable 68-56 lead. McGraw stayed with the press, and Morris continued to shred it to bits, scoring six of their last twelve points on uncontested layups and the other six from the charity stripe.

McGraw, the IAC Champion by way of a 61-59 win over Dryden, closed its season with a record of 16-6, while Morris stands at 19-3 with one more to go. The Mustangs better enjoy it while they can, however, for along with the graduation of Gorsira, they may have to contend with a search for a new coach once the season is finally over. Rumors abounded at courtside that this will be Tom Moriarty's last year at the Mustang helm, some say as a result of his role in a teacher's strike earlier in the year.

# YOGA AT MCS

Kelly Morrissey from the Oneonta YMCA spent some time at MCS this January. She enjoyed working with Morris students during PE classes. Kelly's yoga stressed flexibility, balance, and mindfulness.

