

The Charger

Volume 7, Number 1

OCTOBER 2003

www.thecharger.org

More spirit days top council agenda

BY JESSICA L.
OP-ED EDITOR

School has started and among the many activities in full swing here at Peacock is student council. Council President Kevin H. and Vice-President Evin S. have high hopes for the upcoming school year.

First of all, they would like to see the dances last longer. They would also like to have themed dances like "Hawaiian Night" or "60's Night."

In addition to selling pizza, pop and glow-sticks, they hope to add more raffles.

Another of their goals is to have more spirit days. At the first student council meeting of the year, which took place on Wednesday, September 17, 2003, they discussed what kind of spirit days we should have.

The students came up with several very creative ideas. Among those ideas were twin day, where every one picks a partner and dresses identically, and crazy hat day, where everyone wears their favorite or craziest hat.

Another idea was silent day where nobody would be allowed to talk, but instead they would have to communicate by writing notes.

See **Student Council**
Page 5

Inside

Springfield Trip - p. 3

Starbucks opens - p. 4

Pledge of Allegiance - p. 6

Choir in uniforms? - p. 7

The Book Nook - p. 9

All this and more!



Photo by Jessica L.

Student council president and vice-president, eighth graders Kevin H. and Evin S., listen as Dr. Nickisch addresses a Student Council meeting.

Peacock vandalized twice over summer

BY AMY E.
NEWS EDITOR

Over the summer, you may have heard about the major construction happening at Peacock. With all the activity, it was hard to keep everything under control. There were two tagging incidents. 'Tagging' is the slang term of something being damaged by spray painting.

Both involved the school but one involved the whole town of Itasca. There are a lot of rumors going around about what really happened, but this information is coming straight from Peacock Principal Dr. Nickisch and Itasca Police Officer Ross Crotty.

See **Vandalism**, Page 2



Photo by Amy E.

Peacock was spray painted, or "tagged," in a vandalism incident this past summer.

Principal has high expectations

BY PAMELA R.

Almost everyone was busy over the summer, and Peacock principal Dr. Nickisch was no exception. He was busy meeting with building contractors and getting ready for the incoming school year by making schedules and handbooks.

When interviewed recently, Dr. Nickisch discussed some changes at Peacock and offered the students some advice.

Dr. Nickisch advised new students to be sure to keep their backpacks light.

Students might notice that their school is a little different. Instead of having four language arts teachers, they now have three. The fourth used to cover reading, but now the other three teachers are covering reading. Miss Betlej is the new resource teacher.

The eighth graders also have many field trips to look forward to, in which they will meet some of the most intelligent scientists in the world and also get a more in-depth look at World War Two and the Holocaust.

Dr. Nickisch, at the request of a group of students, is thinking about hosting another talent show.

Students are expected to treat the Peacock as if it was their "home away from home," meaning that they are expected to respect

others' property and pick up after themselves.

Dr. Nickisch advised new students to be sure to keep their backpacks light. They should get to know their schedules and which books they need for which classes.

His advice to the eighth graders was to keep in mind that they were the role models of the school and to remember the impact their behavior has on the other grade levels.

When Dr. Nickisch was asked about last year's eighth grade class, he said that they were some of the most intelligent students ever to come to Peacock. More kids from last year's class have been placed in honors classes at Lake Park than any other year.

According to Dr. Nickisch, "That group last year was an outstanding group, who had among them some kids who were less than outstanding, who caused some problems for me, the teachers, and probably for the building, too."

Dr. Nickisch, at the request of a group of students, is thinking about hosting another talent show.

On a last note, Dr. Nickisch would like to have the eighth graders know that "All indicators point to an outstanding year for this group of eighth grade students, and I'm excited about the year. I think you guys are going to be a tremendous group."

One million pop tabs collected for charity

BY AMY E.

Six years ago Washington Primary School (now Benson Primary) started to collect pop can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House Charities to help sick children and their families. The goal was to collect one million pop tabs, and on Tuesday, September 30, 2003, they collected their one millionth tab.

This year's eighth grade class was the very first class to participate in this fund-raising effort. The pop tabs collected will

This year's eighth grade class was the very first class to participate in this fund-raising effort.

go to the Ronald McDonald House and each pound of tabs will give the charity a certain amount of money.

Second grade teacher, Ms. Mitchell, and a former second grade teacher, and now the librarian at Benson, Mrs. Reuter, started the collection and now invite you to join them and the second graders to help package the tabs. This will happen October 29, 2003 after school, and there will be a pizza party afterwards. There will be a sign up sheet posted on Mr. Travis's door. She hopes to see you there.

Police still investigating vandalism incidents

Continued from page 1

There were two major tagging incidents in Itasca, both involving Peacock Middle School, one in June and the other in August.

Other places vandalized included Spring Brook Nature Center, the Itasca Library, the railroad junction box on Catalpa St., the 7-11, multiple village parking signs, Tree Guys Pizza parking garage, the School District building, and the swan house in Usher Park.

There was over \$5,000 worth of damage done just to Peacock.

So far the police have gotten some leads and charged four juveniles with criminal damage to town property in relation with the gang graffiti. Because they are juveniles, their names cannot be revealed to the public.

There was over \$5,000 worth of damage done just to Peacock.

Two of those charged are residents of Itasca, and two live in Wood Dale. There is an ongoing investigation relating to the graffiti at Peacock. No arrests have been made yet.

The leads came from comments overheard

by students at the Itasca pool. The offenders may be former Peacock students.

The penalties for the tagging incidents could result in the offenders having to pay back the victims for the cost of the clean up of the graffiti.

If you have any information on this or any other acts of criminal damage to property of the village, please call the DuPage County Crimestoppers at 1-800-424-9119. There is a reward of up to \$1,000 for any useful information.

It's that time of the year again

Peacock students visit Springfield

BY JOANNA M.
FEATURES EDITOR

Each year the eighth graders and their teachers go on a traditional trip to Springfield, Illinois. This year, everyone had to meet at the school at 5:45 a.m., which meant getting up at five in order not to miss the whole thing.

"It was really bad. I was like sleep walking the whole time," stated eighth grader Julie Partyka. Pam R. took a different view of the early start. "It was good to have a head start, and afterwards I couldn't believe I was up all day. It gives you a lot of energy."

Many eighth graders look forward to the annual field trip as a great way to get out of school. According to social studies teacher Ms. Heppler, the educational point of the trip is to show the eighth graders the sites of the state capital, so that they will seem more real and interesting when the students study about them in class.

With only one stop during the four-hour trip, and with cornfields all around, Peacock students couldn't wait to see the sites.

The students saw one of the places where Lincoln worked and toured several official offices in a grand building.

Their first stop was New Salem, an 1820s village. Walking through the small wooden houses, stores, and hearing the village's history helped the students imagine how people back then, including Abraham Lincoln, had to live.

After another hour or so, the students reached their second destination, The Old Capital. The students saw one of the places where Lincoln worked and toured several official offices in a grand building. This was not generally considered a highlight of the trip.

"The Old State Capital was boring and our tour guide was crabby," commented Julie P.

Only a few minutes walk away, the students toured Lincoln's Law Offices. "It was fun but I didn't like the way that they didn't allow us to touch the things that were actually Lincoln's," noted Pam.

Afterwards the students visited the New



Photo by Joanna M.

The Old Capital building was just one stop on the eighth grade field trip to Springfield, Illinois on Friday, September 5, 2003.

Capital where they saw the State Senate and the Representatives Hall, which was under construction at the time. Also, the whole group was allowed to walk up very near to the top of the building and take a good look at the ceiling, which was hand-painted.

We also went to the Illinois Art Museum as a rest stop. Several students commented on the "cool" exhibits.

With so many hours already behind the group, it was time for everybody's favorite time of the day. Dinner.

Arriving at The Old Country Buffet in Springfield, it wasn't until half way through the meal that everybody noticed that the trip had gone well—a little bit too well. The next moment was one that everyone remembered.

Three eighth grade boys decided that it would be fun to play a little joke and lighten up the trip. In the middle of the restaurant while everybody was eating, the boys set-off a stink bomb.

Not everyone realized what had happened at first, but all the students interviewed agreed that the smell was really awful.

The students who set-off the stink bomb were eventually suspended by Peacock Principal Dr. Nickisch.

Is it becoming a Peacock tradition to ruin the Springfield trip? Ms. Heppler didn't think so. She thought it was just a few individuals acting out and making poor choices that unfortunately affected everyone.

Some Peacock students were also disgusted when they saw a bug crawling around in the cookie

container. "It was a quarter of an inch long and really gross and orange, and crawling around in the cookies," explained Pam. Julie also saw the "disgusting" bug.

Most students agreed that this year's Springfield trip was one to remember, and with a four-hour drive back to school, it was a tiring one.

When they finally got back around ten pm, the eighth graders were eager to go home, but not so eager to return to school after their free day and to hear about their antics in Springfield.

Is it becoming a Peacock tradition to ruin the Springfield trip? Ms. Heppler didn't think so.

Octoberfest at Peacock only a week away

Annual Senior Luncheon nearly ready

BY EMILY W.
SPORTS EDITOR

On October 17, 2003, approximately 150 senior citizens will be entering Peacock Middle School looking forward to a German feast. Twenty-four eighth grade students will prepare, cook, and serve during the luncheon. The choir will also perform some German songs.

Mrs. Mann is the supervisor for the luncheon. Over the summer she researched German cuisine. She then looked at books and tested recipes to see if they would be easy enough for the students to make.

This year the young chefs will be cooking bratwurst, baked apples, navy bean soup, and a German Chocolate Cake.

Not only does Mrs. Mann have to worry about what to make, it's also important for the students to learn how to handle food properly: "It's really important to look at the sanitation. You must make sure the food is handled correctly so there is not the possibility of a food-borne illness. You look at every aspect, where you bought it, how it's transported; you don't want anyone to get sick."

"It takes about five weeks to actually prepare the luncheon," explained Mrs. Mann.

"That's with decorations, food, research and shopping. It takes a long time."

Twelve students will do the cooking for the luncheon, and twelve will be the wait staff. They will wear custom German clothes, lederhosen, and drindl dresses. The table settings will be decorated with the German colors, and the students will decide on the centerpieces.

The eighth grade FACS elective students are very excited about the luncheon. "The theme this year is unique just like any other senior luncheon theme. I think it's really good especially because of the costumes we wear," said Crystal K.

"I think the theme is really cool and the seniors will really like it and have tons of fun," added Nicole Majkowicz.

Each student has a slightly different job for the upcoming luncheon. "One of my jobs is to set up the favors for the seniors and another is to be a waitress. I love my parts! I'm trying to think of a speech to first say to the seniors. The favors will be fun to make, too," said Samantha Moretti.

Nicole said, "I'm on wait staff, and I'm

going shopping for the luncheon. I love my part in the luncheon because I get to wear festive costumes. And on the shopping trip, I get Portillo's for lunch!"

Mrs. Dengler is also contributing to the luncheon. Her advisory students will make a German Cut Paper project, which will decorate the cafeteria, where the festivities will take place.

The sixth grade art students have been studying Paul Klee, a German-Swiss artist. The students' final projects will be hanging in the hallway leading up to the cafeteria.

The eighth grade photography elective students have been studying a German art school called the Bauhaus. They did a photogram project based on the Bauhaus, which will be displayed.

Also, the two best photographers will be in charge of taking pictures during the luncheon.

Everyone is really looking forward to the luncheon. Mrs. Mann is excited even though she knows it's a lot of work.

Crystal added, "I'm really looking forward to being a part of the senior citizen luncheon. After we spend all that time preparing everything, the work will definitely pay off."

"I think the theme is really cool and the seniors will really like it and have tons of fun," added Nicole M.

Starbucks Coffee in Itasca opens on time

BY JULIE P.

At one time or another everyone has passed that old abandoned gas station thinking, wouldn't it be great if it were turned into something? Well, that dream has finally become a reality. The newly built Starbucks Coffee opened on September 26, 2003.

Bill Havel is the head of the building department of Itasca. Mr. Havel commented that the reason the construction took so long to begin was that the property was very hard to lease. This was because the village was undecided about the Irving Park expansion. That matter is not yet settled.

Another problem was that there were gas tanks underground on the site. They were removed but there was some gas leakage that had to be cleaned up too.

"I probably won't visit it when it opens because I'm not really into specialty coffee," said Mr. Havel.

Mr. Havel might not be into Starbucks, but eighth grader Joanna M. definitely is.

"Starbucks coming to Itasca is the best thing in the world!" she commented enthusiastically.

Her classmate Claire Z. disagreed. She added, "I don't really like coffee but I am looking forward to trying their frappochinos."

Fellow eighth grader Pamela R.



Photo by Julia P.

commented that she couldn't wait to snack on chocolate covered blueberries and do homework.

Sixth graders perform community service

BY TIMMY B.

Peacock Middle School students are required to perform six hours of community service each year. Several sixth graders recently discussed what they were doing to fulfill this requirement.

Louie B. has already completed his community service hours for this year. He said, "I did not enjoy doing the job because it was picking up trash along Irving Park Road."

Louie believed his efforts helped the community by keeping it clean. He added, however, "if people would stop throwing their litter on the road, it would help even more."

Louie would have done this job anyway because it is something his Boy Scout Troop

participates in every month during the warmer weather.

Max G. completed his community service this summer during the 3 on 3-basketball tournament at the Itasca Fest.

He helped by serving the drinks to the participants while they were competing. Max said, "I really enjoyed doing this."

He was able to be outside all day and it was a fun activity. He also said, "I think community

He added, however, "if people would stop throwing their litter on the road, it would help even more."

service is a good idea."

If anyone needs to get ideas to fulfill their community service requirement, they should look at the list in their common time rooms or talk to their advisory teachers.

Council plans more pep rallies

Continued from page 1

Kevin and Evin also hope to have more pep rallies to support Peacock's many sports teams. They hope this year's pep rallies will last longer and have more interaction with the audience.

Finally, Kevin and Evin would like to thank all of the voters for electing them and they hope they can fulfill all of our wants and needs through the duration of the year.

Sixth graders do not miss Franzen

They look forward to middle school success

BY JULIA P.

This article reflects what several sixth graders think about Peacock Middle School so far. I interviewed Giana S., Dani D., Eric C., and John P.

Many of the people whom I interviewed said that Mrs. Laughlin was their favorite teacher but also that she gave too much homework. Most said that Mrs. Laughlin was really nice.

Some sixth graders also thought that they got too much math homework.

Some of the goals that these students had for this year were to do better on tests and to get better grades on their report cards.



Photo by Julia P.

No one really misses Franzen.

Eric C., sixth grade, hopes to tryout for the basketball team.

Some students said that Franzen

did not give them enough opportunities to join before or after school activities, other than band and chorus.

At Franzen, they only had gym class twice a week. Everyone interviewed said that they like having gym class every day. Some of the reasons for this were that they liked sports and it was their favorite class.

Also, they liked having gym at the end of the day because it was a good way to release all of their energy. A lot of people are joining cross-country and basketball.

Overall, the new sixth graders were optimistic about really enjoying their first year in middle school.

Subscribe to *The Charger* at home

\$12 mail home subscription

call 773-0335
or
visit <http://thecharger.org/subscribe>

Make checks payable to Peacock Middle School
Send checks to: Peacock Middle School
301 E. North Street
Itasca, IL 60106

WHAT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION SUPPORT WILL DO:

- AID IN THE PURCHASE OF NEEDED ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT
- MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR STUDENTS TO ATTEND WORKSHOPS
- ENABLE THE CHARGER TO CONTINUE JOURNALISTIC EXCELLENCE

A new criteria for the cafeteria

BY SAMANTHA H.

Every day when we walk into the cafeteria, a lot of people go straight to the vending machines, right?

Sure, it's nice to have a cheeseburger or some pizza once in a while, but we need to eat some healthy food to keep us motivated for the rest of the school day.

If we had some fruit cups, Jell-O, or even some cold ham and cheese or turkey sandwiches in our vending machines, we would be much healthier.

We also have a soda machine and a Gatorade machine, but I definitely think we could use some water in our vending machines!

There is an ice cream machine in our school too. Instead of some of the ice cream we should have some low fat popsicles in the machine.

If we had healthy food in our cafeteria I'm sure we would see some improvement in our schoolwork and in our physical well-being.

It has been known for quite a while that obese people have high levels of C-reactive



Illustration by Heather N.

protein (CRP). This causes inflammation to occur inside the body. CRP levels such as cholesterol or high blood pressure can result in future heart disease.

Scientists say that overweight children are more likely to have heart disease in the future

than children of a normal weight. Being overweight is also associated with a higher white blood cell count.

If we had healthier food in our vending machines we would be much healthier students.

And it means what?

The pledge of allegiance

BY DANI D.

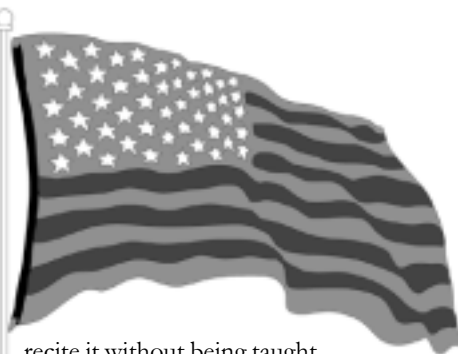
When you were in Benson School saying the pledge of allegiance every morning, did you ever wonder what some of it meant? Not much has changed in eight years.

During my attempted investigation with a couple dozen primary school kids, I learned two things: one, it is no picnic to pose a difficult question to a primary student. How many people do you hear using the word

The cutest reply was from a first grader who thought it meant being nice to the flag.

The cutest reply was from a first grader who thought it meant being nice to the flag.

Respect in school is necessary. The pledge shows respect for the flag, but those who



recite it without being taught the meaning lose the value and purpose behind this tradition.

The vocabulary in the pledge is quite complex for our beloved primary school students. We could do these kids a big favor by teaching them what the pledge means before we make them memorize it.

Do you ever wonder if the students are more proud that they can now say it all the way through, or that they know what they are saying? Comprehension should be important too!

The Charger

News Editor	Amy E.
Op-Ed Editor	Jessica L.
Features Editor	Joanna M.
Creative Writing Editor	Joanna M.
Entertainment Editor	Megan L.
Games Editor	Rena W.
Sports Editor	Emily W.
Art Editors	Alexandra B. Acaisha B.
Graphics Editor	Heather N.
Finishing Editor	Eric A.
Assistant	Tricia H.
Advertisement Editor	Nicole M.
Assistant	Anthony T.
Circulation Editor	Carmen Z.
Faculty Advisor	Mr. Travis

The Charger is published five times a year: October, November, February, March and May by Peacock Middle School, located at 301 E. North Street, Itasca, IL 60143.

Phone: (630)773-0335

Email: staff@thecharger.org

Web: <http://thecharger.org>

Write the editorial board with questions, comments and complaints. Correspondence must be signed.

The Peacock Choir in uniforms?

BY AMANDA M.

The Peacock Music Boosters are considering the purchase of uniforms for the choir this

year. Should they? Here is what a few seventh grade choir members had to say.



Illustration by Acaisha B.



No, because I think that they're ugly, and I think that if we got a Division I in the contest wearing what we wore last year, then we

shouldn't have to wear bow ties and cummerbunds.

Kristyna Z.



No, because cummerbunds are tacky and uncomfortable, and we'll all end up losing our bow ties anyway.

Emily V.



No, because you get really hot in the uniforms, and we're going to be really cramped on stage, and the girls shouldn't wear ties.

Brienne F.



No, because not having uniforms expresses our individuality, and the parents voted on them, but the parents aren't the ones

wearing them.

Molly C.



No, because I think we'll look more professional without uniforms.

Katie N.



Yes we should have uniforms, but they should be more casual, like t-shirts or something like that.

Elizabeth P.

Batter Up!

BY EMILY B.

Baseball is the best sport on earth! When I went to gym class I found out about all the different sports that we could sign up for. I was listening for baseball or softball, but I never heard them. I was very disappointed.

A lot of other boys and girls like baseball too. I bet if all the students in Peacock had to vote for one sport it would be baseball.

Baseball is a great form of exercise. You have to run, throw the ball, get along with others, and



Illustration by Rena W.
Games Editor

you have to learn how to PAY ATTENTION!

A lot of schools have a baseball team and I would like our school to be one of them!

Enough with the writing

BY ERIC A.
FINISHING EDITOR

I believe, along with many Peacock students, that there is too much writing during the school day! Sure, major writing is required in all main classes, but does it have to be in encore too?

The school even went too far with writing in main classes. To start off, we all agree that writing should be eliminated from gym. Writing in gym serves no purpose. The only writing allowed in gym should be on tests.

For encore classes, teachers should just make us write what is necessary for tests. Also, those worksheets we have to do during a movie in encore serve no purpose if they are not used on a test or quiz.

Sure, writing is necessary, but during the time of the day where we are supposed to get a little break we still have to deal with WRITING! I'm kind of surprised that most Peacock graduates don't suffer wrist pains. We need a break!

Renovation woes



Cartoon by Acaisha B.
Art Editor

CHARACTER COUNTS!



October 2003

Responsibility

Blaine Q.

Kali A.

Alex A.

Amy E.

Jasmine K.

Carina M.

David M.

Sam M.

Raya P.

Westin R.

Jamie S.

Colin T.

Liz H.

Jacqueline C.

Jimmy B.

Caring

John P.

Citizenship

Carmen Z.

Westin R.

Andy R.

Alex A.

Fairness

Alana D.

The Book Nook



Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

A worthy new volume

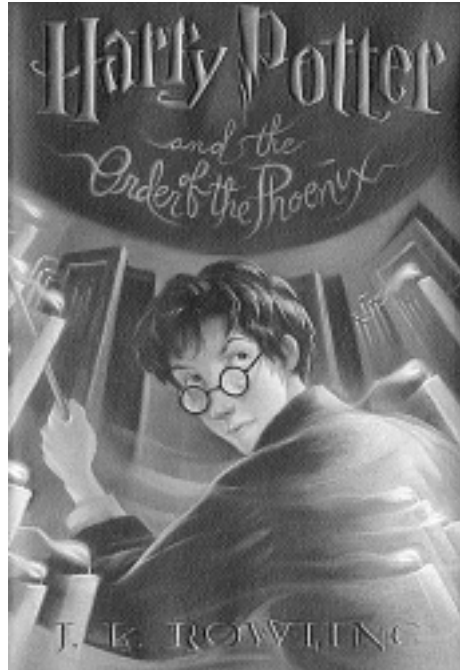
BY MARISA G.

J.K. Rowling has done it again! *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is the fifth book in the thrilling series.

Even though this book is a lengthy 870 pages, it's worth reading. Once you start reading, it's almost impossible to stop.

This book begins in the summer before Harry starts his fifth year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Harry's new defense against the dark arts teacher works at making Harry's year at Hogwarts miserable. The *Daily Prophet* also sends out lies.

See **Harry Potter**
Page 10



<http://www.amazon.com>

The jury votes "Yes" for Trial by Journal

BY JULIA W.



<http://www.amazon.com>

What would you do if you got a letter delivered to your home saying that you were going to be a juvenile juror on a murder trial? That's exactly what happens to 12-year-old Lily Watson.

In Kate Klise's book *Trial by Journal*, Missouri passes a new law proclaiming if a child is a victim of a crime, then another child must be on the jury. While on the case, Lily has to keep a journal of all that happens for school, even though she doesn't want to.

Lily's classmate Perry Keet was murdered while working at his job at the zoo. The citizens of Tyleville, Missouri, all think the killer is Bob White, a lonely animal lover who also works at the zoo.

This book was really good. It was a fast read, suspenseful, and humorous.

The journal format of this novel is a lot of fun to read. The whole book is a series of journal entries, letters, newspaper articles, notes, and pictures. The reader needs to put all the pieces together to solve the mystery.

See **Trial by Journal**
Page 10

Off the Shelf

Novel News from the
Itasca Community Library

By Lori Craft

The library is pleased to have a spot in the Charger in which to recommend great books and to let you in on any upcoming library activities for teens.

Brand New Reads:

For fantasy lovers who like fairy tale retellings, try *East* by Edith Pattou. When a white bear mysteriously shows up at Rose's home and asks her to come away with him in exchange for the health and prosperity of her ailing family, she agrees – leading her on an epic journey of love, betrayal, and loss.

For sports fanatics, try *The Boy Who Saved Baseball* by John H. Ritter. Doc Altenheimer is going to sell his 320 acres of prime real estate (which includes the town's baseball field), unless a group of local boys can win a baseball game against the well-equipped summer-camp team down the road.

Looking for something a little different, try *Samurai Spirit* by Burt Konzak.

This short story collection mixes samurai lore and testimonials to provide inspirational tales about Japanese samurai warriors and present-day heroes possessing a samurai spirit.

Paul Klee leads the way for the senior citizens luncheon

BY ANDREA P.

Mrs. Dengler's sixth grade art class has been learning about creations made by the artist Paul Klee. One of his works of art is called "Sinbad the Sailor."

The assignment for the class was to re-draw Paul Klee's creation using the same methods he used.

First they drew in their sketchbooks and then outlined the sketch on a larger piece of paper.

Finally, the sixth grade class colored it in with oil pastels.

Their pictures will be displayed at the Senior Citizen Luncheon.



Photo by Andrea P.

Ryan C., sixth grade, colors in his sketch with oil pastels in the style of Paul Klee.

New student feels at home

BY MEGAN L.
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Alex E. is a new student at Peacock Middle School. She used to go to Clay Junior High School.

Alex has said that she misses her old friends a lot, but doesn't miss her teachers.

She thinks that the students here are great, they made her feel welcome.

Alex thinks that Itasca is a cute little town.

Alex thinks that Itasca is a cute little town. She has made a lot of new friends.

Alex thinks the teachers are great and nice.

Her favorite subject is Gym. Alex has joined cross-country and soccer since she arrived.

She has commented that she has received too much homework.

Alex really likes Rap and R&B. The last book that she read was *The Outsiders*. Her hobbies are dancing and playing soccer.

Order of the Phoenix darker than rest of Potter series

Continued from page 9

The Order of the Phoenix is darker than the previous books. Harry has become a teen with an attitude problem.

Some new characters are introduced while some familiar faces are brought back.

A lot of the plots in this story are more complicated than the other books in the series.

Some of the plots were very surprising,

while none of them were the least bit predictable.

On a scale of one through five, I'd give this novel a four. If you like magic and enjoyed the previous books, J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* should not be missed.

Author: J.K. Rowling

Publisher: Arthur A. Levine

Date of Publication: July, 2003

Harry has become a teen with an attitude problem.

Trial by Journal is a great mystery

Continued from page 9

Kate Klise is a great author. If you enjoy *Trial by Journal* and the way it is written, then you will also like her other two books, *Regarding*

the Fountain and *Letters from Camp*. I totally recommend this book and give *Trial by Journal* a 5 out of a 1-5 scale.

Author- Kate Klise

Genre-Mystery

Publisher- HarperCollins

Date of publication- May 8, 2001

Sixth grade gymnast flips for fun

BY TESSIE F.

Being such a small school, Peacock is very fortunate to have so many before and after school activities.

Students participate in basketball, volleyball, track, cross-country, chorus, band and newspaper. This is where students meet new teachers and make new friends.

Some students also participate in activities outside of school.

Sixth grader Ashley N. is a gymnast at Itasca Park District. Ashley practices sixteen hours a week, which is divided into four days.

Ashley has been participating in gymnastics since she was six years old.

The older and more advanced gymnasts get, the higher level they will achieve. Out of ten levels of gymnastics, Ashley is a level seven gymnast.

She enjoys gymnastics very much. Events at meets are very nerve racking and scary for Ashley.

Practices for Ashley begin with stretches which all of the gymnasts do. The stretches include push-ups, chin-ups, sit-ups and running.

The gymnasts stretch out all of their muscles, and then begin practicing beam, vault, bars, and floor routines for meets.

Ashley's coaches, Chris and Maureen, help all the gymnasts, if they need it.

Ashley hopes to some day become a level ten gymnast with the help from her coaches.

Sixth grader, Ashley N., performs a dismount during her beam routine at a meet in the Winter of 2003.



Photo provided by Ashley N.



Dance Corner, Inc.

190 N. Q, R, S
 Corner of Army Trail Rd. & Swift Rd.
 Addison, IL. 60101
(630) 620-1566





" 2002 Last Dance National Championship Award Winners"

- "2002 Overall High Mini Score Award"
- "2002 Best Choreography Award"
- "2002 Elite Team Recipient"

" 2002 Dance Scholarship Award Recipients"

- "2001 BEST of the BEST Award"
- "2001 Dance Educator of America"
- "2000-2001 Studio Excellence Award"

Classes Offered In...

Jazz* Tap * Hip Hop * Ballet *
 Pointe * Lyrical * Modern *
 Musical Theater * Children's
 Combination Classes *
 Creative Movement *
 Tumbling *

Adult Class Options

New Horizon's Dance Company

Have a Spooktacular Halloween!



From your friends at
Itasca McDonald's
1000 Irving Park Road
& 1301 E. Irving Park Road

Go Chargers!!

There are more than 28,000 McDonald's restaurants around the world; 13,000 in the United States; 470 in Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana.

* McDonald's founder Ray Kroc believed in "giving something back to the community." Through Ronald McDonald House Charities of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana, over \$7.7 million has been given to

378 local organizations that serve children.

* More than a third of McDonald's independent owner/operators and more than half of McDonald's Corporation executives began their careers in a McDonald's restaurant.



Canadian singer songwriter well worth a listen

BY JUDI P.

Are you bored of the same old music? Do you want someone new to listen to? Well, I was just very impressed with some new music by Canadian singer/songwriter, Fefe Dobson.

Dobson's songs have a hard rock edge. She lists as her influences artists as different as Nirvana and Madonna. Her new single, "Take me away" is really quite good. I listened to the song over and over again, but I didn't get sick of it. Instead I started to sing along. It had a great beat and it's fast.

Dobson's full length debut album, *Take Me Away*, is due out in October.



<http://www.amazon.com>

Now When will they stop?

BY DANIELLE J.



<http://www.amazon.com>

When will they stop making *Now* CDs? They keep making new ones with bad songs and they keep getting worse with each new release.

Most of the songs are old or not played on the radio and the ones that are have been over-played.

Everybody from Justin Timberlake to Coldplay are on *Now 13*. Jennifer Lopez "I'm Glad" Lisa Marie Presley "Lights Out" and Nas "I Can" are also on it.

I would rate *Now 13* a 2 out of 5. They need new and better songs.

Ken Majkowicz

Touch of Beauty Carpeting

Cleaning & Installation

410 Catalpa
Itasca, IL 60143

Pager: 708 817 7229
Cell Phone: 630 772 4836

Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic

BY PATRICK G.

Star Wars Knights of the Old Republic is one of the best RPGS (role playing games) of the year. This game lets you pick which path you want to be on, the Light or Dark Side. It's a single player game and you can adjust the difficulty or challenge level.

In the beginning, you design your character, a girl or boy, by picking whichever face you like. Then you can give your character special traits, or just let the computer do it. Finally, you give your character a name.



www.lucasarts.com

As you play, the game tells you everything you need to know. It explains who you were and what your previous life was. A cool part of the game is picking which side you want to follow, the Light or the Dark.

To choose your side you have to pick the right things. For example, if you wanted to be on the Dark Side you would have to say bad things. You wouldn't care if you hurt someone.

There are a few secrets in the Knights of the Old Republic but I can't tell you all of them, it would ruin the game. I'll share one with you--Ballista, a person in your party or team, is turned to the Dark Side.

You don't get your light saber until the next planet, which takes a while to get to. You can build your own light saber and pick which colors you want, but the colors show what side you're on.

Blue shows you're a Jedi Guardian, the other two colors are yellow and green. Later you can pick up parts and colors for your light saber to change the color and strength of it.

See **Star Wars**
Page 14

Tony Hawk Underground (THUG)

BY EVIN S.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater series have made awesome improvements on each past game. Most of the changes may not seem that major at first, but mastering and completing each game requires you to learn its new moves and combos to beat the game.

The makers at Neversoft have done a great job of changing things up without breaking anything that worked in the previous games, but this year the developer had its largest challenge ahead of it. This game is not out yet and I have not played it, but by watching video clips and reading professional reviews I can tell this game is going to be the best yet.

The story mode, which will have four different difficulty settings, is designed to challenge your game play and requires you to create your own skater using a beefed-up version of the create-a-skater mode that has been in the series of Tony Hawk games for years.

There is one mode that will allow you to use your own face textures in the game. This will allow you to create yourself. The option requires you to get your PlayStation 2 online, but you can't do it with your PS2 alone.

You'll need to e-mail a head shot to a special e-mail address. Once it has been processed, you'll be given a password.



<http://www.activision.com>

Entering the password that will let you download the picture that you sent in and bingo, your face right into the game as a virtual skater.

Have you ever wanted a tattoo or a piercing? Well, once you have your picture downloaded you can add that stuff wherever you want.

If you've ever played Tony Hawk you know that sometimes you just want to get off your board and walk around, well now you can. You can even grab on to ledges and shim across. (Please don't try to shim across electric wires in the real world!)

The story mode portion of THUG looks like it will be a pretty cool new take on the expanded career mode found in last year's Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4.

Look for Tony Hawk's Underground to come to the PlayStation 2, Xbox, and GameCube during the last week of October, 2003.

Star Wars

Continued from page 13

You can have many combinations of light sabers: two single sabers, a single saber, a staff saber, or two short sabers.

The evil person or enemy in this game is Darth Malak. He's a tough player and someone to watch out for. There are eight levels for this game.

Its overall rating would be a 10 and the Graphics are a 9.

Its play control is a 7 because most of the

controlling is difficult, you have to hit a lot of buttons to fight.

The game play is a 10.

Its fun factor is a 9, but if you hate Star Wars it not might be for you. It's priced at about \$50.00.

Soul Caliber II challenges

BY JOHN G.

Soul Caliber II is a fun and difficult game. It has many characters and tons of levels to unlock. It has an adventure mode, an arcade mode, and many others.

The adventure mode is cool and all but it is extremely difficult at the midway point and on. It is available for three systems (Playstation 2, Xbox, and Gamecube).

Each system has its own special character. Gamecube has links to another game, The Legend of Zelda.

Xbox has the character, Spawn, from the movie Spawn.



<http://www.soulcalibur.com>

Finally, Playstation 2 has a character from the game Tekken.

The controls are easy for the most part except when doing complicated attacks.

The sound from certain characters can get annoying. Each character has its own ending movie, but it's not what you think, it's a slide show with writing underneath.

The arenas are very well detailed and are fun to play in. They all have certain traps and special features. One feature that is in all the maps is that you can push your opponent off the arena and win the match.

The story line is somewhat hard to understand.

All characters have a move called a soul charge, in which the character gets a power boost for ten seconds and his attacks pierce blocking.

There are many diverse weapons in the game (they're not all-just swords).

Overall I would buy this game.

Overall rating- 9

Graphics- 10

Sound- 7

Play control- 9

Fun factor- 10

S. R. P. - 50\$

Number of players 1-2

The difficulty is adjustable from easy, medium, and hard

Freaky Friday is lots of fun

BY JACQUELINE C.

In this Disney remake of the 1976 original, Jamie Lee Curtis plays Ellen, a widow about to be remarried, who argues constantly with her daughter, Annabel, who is played by Lindsey Lohan.

The two wish they could exchange bodies so that the other could see each other's point of view and then somehow it happens!

Complications arise as Ellen (as Annabel) worries about Annabel (as Ellen) getting too close to her future stepfather (played by Mark Harmon) while Annabel must fake doing her mom's job as a psychiatrist.

I highly recommend you seeing this movie if you like funny adventurous movies!

Genre: Teen Comedy

Rated: PG13



<http://www.amazon.com>

The first day of school



Cartoon by Sarah Z.

TREE-GUYS

Pizza Pub

101 E. Irving Park Rd.
Itasca, IL

Ph: (630) 773-4990
Fax: (630) 773-4994

TREE-GUYS

\$2.00 OFF
any order over
\$10.00

expires November 20, 2003

The Charger, Peacock Middle School

TREE-GUYS

\$3.00 OFF
any order over
\$15.00

expires November 20, 2003

The Charger, Peacock Middle School

TREE-GUYS

\$4.00 OFF
any order over
\$20.00

expires November 20, 2003

The Charger, Peacock Middle School

TREE-GUYS

Buy a large or Xtra Large Pizza and get a Small Cheese Pizza FREE

expires November 20, 2003

The Charger, Peacock Middle School

Do you remember second grade at Benson Primary? Starlab? Dinosaurs? The continent song? The community luncheon? Collecting pop tabs for The Arithmetech Club?

Well, the collection has continued, and now Ms. Mitchell and Mrs. Reuter have



1,000,036
pop tabs

to pack up and deliver to The Ronald McDonald House.

And you have community service hours to perform.

Please come to Benson Primary after school on

Wednesday, October 29

to help pack up the pop tabs in boxes for delivery to The Ronald McDonald House in Maywood. Pizza will be provided.

You must sign-up in the music room
by **Monday, October 27**
to be included.

Cubs fever sweeps Peacock

Could this be the year?

BY BEN C. AND GEO N.

The Cubs clinched the National League Central Division during the second to last game of the season. They finished just one game ahead of the Houston Astros.

On September 30, 2003, the Cubs met the Atlanta Braves in the first round of the playoffs. Cubs ace Kerry Wood was on the mound and the rest was history. Wood not only pitched really well, but sent a shot to deep left to score two runs in the sixth inning when the Cubs did most of their scoring.

Wood was pulled in the seventh after walking two, but reliever Kyle Farnsworth kept the damage to one run. Then Cubs surprising and spectacular closer Joe Borowski came in. The score was Cubs four, Atlanta two. For the Braves, a single, a ground out, two more singles, and a pop up to the catcher. With the bases loaded and two outs, a hit could tie the game but Borowski wouldn't let that happen. He struck out the final batter and slammed the door on the Braves.

In game two in Atlanta, the Cubs lost five to three. But when they returned to the friendly confines of a packed to capacity Wrigley Field, the Cubs other amazing starter, Mark Prior, pitched a masterful game, and Chicago won three to one.

The Cubs let the fourth game slip away, but when Wood returned to the mound on Sunday (Oct. 5) night, their victory never really seemed in doubt. Wood dominated the usually explosive Atlanta lineup and the Cubs won five to one. Play off success at last for the Chicago Cubs! The Cubs meet the Florida Marlins for the National League Championship Series on beginning on Oct 7.



THIS IS THE LAST TIME YOU RUIN OUR FUN! HAHAA!
 ♥ comic BY ALEXANDRA B A.K.A

Cartoon by Alexandra B. Art Editor



Eighth grade Cubs fans, David B., Colin T. Alissa D. and David M. show their Cubs spirit. Dr. Nickisch has permitted students to wear Cubs hats in school during the playoffs.

Cross Country team ends season with good record

Continued from page 20

Megan Schultz added, "Elizabeth R. helped me in running because I knew we ran the same pace, so I just ran with her. There was a big hill that we had to run up three times, and it was hard."

Jessica D. said "One of my best friends Sammy M. helped me while I ran because she kept encouraging me by saying that my cramp would go away after I finished. That made me run faster."

Do you ever wonder what some of the runners think about while they run? Megan said, "I think about how good it feels to place well, so I push myself even more."

Jess smiled and replied, "I sing songs and think about happy thoughts."

Megan added "It's hard to keep going near the end of the course because I ran out of breath."

Jess disagreed. "It's easier because I think about beating the people in front of me and I think I'll be done faster."

According to Megan, meets are the best

part of cross country. As Jess explained, "You get to see your friends and I enjoy running" They agreed that the hard part of cross country was all the practicing.

But Megan and Jess also added, "The coaches help us run harder and they keep us going"

Seventh grader Dana Y. came in 29th place. She thought that the other teams were very competitive.

Dana said, "The big hill that we had to run up three times made the course hard, but when I run, I tell myself that I can do it. It's easier to keep going at the end of the course because I get a boost of energy and I start sprinting."

This is Dana's second year in cross country. Dana enjoys running with her friends and noted that the coaches were very encouraging at the meet: "They say *good job*, even if you finish in last place."

After finishing, sixth grader Elizabeth R. commented, "It was hard to run, especially going up and down the hill."

She added, "The warm weather and the large hill hurt my running, but I think about pushing myself harder or I think about something else to take my mind off running.

"It's much harder to keep going at the end," said Elizabeth, "but knowing that I can finish makes it easier."

This is Elizabeth's first year on the cross country team and already she has shown outstanding running skills. Elizabeth loves the races but admits that she hates running in the heat. She looks forward to competing again next year.

As far as the coaches were concerned, Elizabeth said "they are lots of fun, very supportive, and they always have good tips on running better."

"It's easier because I think about beating the people in front of me and I think I'll be done faster"

Itasca Park District Teen Events October 2003

Itasca Park District Teen Dance

Friday October 24 from
7:30pm – 9:30pm
\$5 per person or bring you
Lounge Card and get an
additional \$1 off!!

The Lounge Hours

Come check out the
Lounge for FREE on
Thursday October
16th!
M/W/F –
3:30pm-8:00pm
Tuesdays –
3:30pm-7:00pm
Thursdays –
2:30pm-7:00pm

Teen Ski Trip

We will once again go to
the all night teen ski party
at Chestnut Mountain.
Teens from all over the
state will be there on Friday
February 6 & 7. We will be
taking a motor coach bus IF
minimum is met, so sign
up now! See flyer for
pricing details!

Community Service Hours

Fulfill your community service
hours by volunteering at our
Annual Children's Halloween
Party! Pizza and soda will be
given out to every volunteer
and you can come in
costume! Stop by the park
district for more information
and to sign up. Volunteers will
be limited this year so sign up
NOW!

Coupon

2004 Teen Ski Trip
\$5 off registration
Valid thru December 5th



Itasca Storm play hard and hang tough

BY CALLIE S.
PICTURES BY EMILY V.

One of Itasca's two U14 Girls soccer teams, the Storm, started its season with a big bang and a 4-0 record.

Head Coach Mr. Shawn Feeney said, "I think we're doing great this year even though we put our team together on such short notice."

The soccer team is made up of some girls who have never played before and some who have been playing for years.

Midfielder Grace R. said, "This is my first year playing, and so far I'm having a great time and we're all working hard."

The Storm's last victory was against the Itasca Cheetahs. There are only two games left in the season.



Photo by Callie S.

Eighth graders Kristen M. and Megan S. compete on the Itasca Storm soccer team. Alex E. (in white) plays for the Itasca Cheetahs.

Lake Park girls swim team stays competitive

BY LIZ REYNERTSON

The Lake Park girls swim team took fifth place with 156.50 points at the West Chicago Invitational on Saturday, September 20, 2003.

Last year, the Lake Park girls were third in the Upstate Eight Conference, first in the York Sectional, and twenty-sixth in the State.

Some of their best swimmers, including Megan Frawley, Kim Geisler, Olivia Wickstrom, Shannon Westfall, and Nicky Marski graduated last year.

The returning state qualifiers are Danielle Herrmann, Jr. (IM, Back); Sam Byrnes, So. (Fly); Ashley Casper, Jr. (Free); Sarah Reynertson, Jr. (Free, Back).

Coach Dan Witteveen believes that placing third in the Upstate Eight is a realistic goal for this year.

At the first meet of the year, they lost, but at the Fremd Invitational Meet they took fourth.

Lake Park girls swim team schedule

Date	Day	Opponent	Level	Place	Time
1-Nov-03	Sat.	Upstate 8 Con.	V	Elgin	8/12pm
3-Nov-03	Mon.	York Invite	JV	York	5:00pm
15-Nov-03	Sat.	IHSA Sectional	V	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN
21-Nov-03	Fri.	IHSA STATE	V	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN
22-Nov-03	Sat.	IHSA STATE	V	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN

PAT'S PLACE

329 Wood Dale Road • Wood Dale
860-0810

**MANICURE
PEDICURE**

\$40⁰⁰

REG. \$45.00

Offer good for new customers and first time clients.
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer.
Expires 11-09-03

**FREE GIFT
WITH ACRYLIC NAILS
FULL SET**

\$40⁰⁰

REG. \$55.00

Offer good for new customers and first time clients.
Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer.
Expires 11-09-03

Charger girls win conference championship



Cross Country team members compete at the Spring Wood meet, Thursday, September 18. Clockwise from bottom left, Carina M. (8), Bryan H. (8) Julia N. (8), Natalie W. (7), Samantha M. (8), Jessica D. (8), Steve L. (8), Jessica L. (8), Stephanie D. (6), Elizabeth R. (6), Megan S. (8). (Photos by Julia N. and Rena W.)

BY CRYSTAL K.

The Peacock girls' cross country team has performed well this year, winning the conference championship.

The sixth and seventh grade boys team finished third, and the eighth grade boys finished seventh.

At the Spring Wood meet on September 18, the girls finished first in a three school field.

After the race, Mrs. Engel commented, "There were three very intense races, but the first race was the most intense because the excitement level was high. The runners had to run up the big hill three times."

Peacock runners made up most of the top ten. Eighth grader Megan S. came in second, sixth grader Elizabeth R. came in third, eighth graders Julia N., Pam R. and Rebecca K. came

in fifth, sixth and seventh respectively; and finally, sixth graders Kara F. and Collen B. finished in eighth and ninth.

Even after the girls' outstanding performance, there were some things that Coach Engel thought they could improve on. "The effort in the practices can always improve," she said.

Mrs. Engel enjoys coaching cross country. "It's one of my favorite sports and a lot of fun," she explained. She added, "Peacock has a lot of outstanding runners."

Some of the cross country girls had several comments to add as well. Eighth graders Megan S. and Jessica D. said "The race was really hard but also fun."

See **Cross Country**, Page 18

Inside

Itasca Storm - p. 19

CUBS! - p. 17

Game reviews - p. 14

Music reviews - p. 13

Sixth grade gymnast - p. 11

Paul Klee art - p. 10

All this and more!