

News from the Middle School

VOLUME III ISSUE 6

FEBRUARY 2010

The Principal's Pen

Dear Parents,

As you know, the economic situation has taken its toll on many people, including people who live in our community. As a member of the Board of Directors for Catholic Charities, I have seen firsthand the effects of the economy on our local families. In particular, our food pantries are unable to keep up with demand. Although donations are plentiful during the holidays, regrettably this isn't the case throughout the rest of the year. An ongoing food collection has now begun in each of our five school buildings and will run continuously throughout the entire school year. I would like to thank our site coordinators for all their help: Ann Mueller, Michelle Carey, Gosia Geiger, Tracey Freeman, Beth Miller, and Joanne Trapane (NCBI). On page 2 of this newsletter is a "grocery list" of items needed on a recurring basis. Please consider picking up a few of these items each time you shop. Your child can then help by bringing the food items to school. If we all chip in a little on a consistent, on-going basis, we can help feed our neighbors who are truly in need.

On Saturday, January 16, several of our seventh grade students participated in the Future Cities Competition. The competition encourages students to explore their creativity and imagination and to apply math, science, and engineering skills to design realistic future communities. Our students won two awards this year: "Excellence in the Design of a City" and "Excellence in Low Impact Energy Generation and Use"! A big thanks goes out to Mr. Brewer and to Mr. Paul Greene (parent volunteer) for all of their hard work. See page 5 for more information.

On Wednesday, February 3, Mr. Tuczinski facilitates our annual 8th grade orientation program at the High School. This is a great opportunity for parents and students alike to get a feeling of what the high school will be like.

This is a good time of year to review the district's policy on electronic use during the school day. Please review the policy with your child.

School will not be in session from February 15-19 due to Winter Recess. Enjoy the time off with your children!

Sincerely,
Tim Farley
 Principal

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Food Pantries
- Future City
- 8th Grade Orientation
- Winter Recess

Feeding our Friends:

Below is an e-mail I received from Don Campbell of the Valatie Food Pantry. Please clip out the list of items and place in your purse or wallet so it is readily accessible when you are shopping for groceries.

Dear Mr. Farley,

I want to thank you and your team for undertaking your ongoing food collection to benefit the local pantries. In our phone conversation you had expressed an interest in the "number served" statistics of the Valatie Pantry. In calendar year 2009 we served 1001 families for an average of 83 families per month. Our record month was March, with 101 served, and in November the number was 98. We served 1447 children (121 per month) and 2425 adults (165 per month.) For comparison, 2007 saw a monthly average of 65 families (109 children and 129 adults) served per month. Our increase in demand was about 25% from 2007 to 2009.

Fortunately for those needy families, the Ichabod Crane School District is blessed with caring support from it's local citizens, organizations and businesses, including many school groups, classes and clubs over the years. Our Pantry is thrilled that we will be a recipient of food collected as a result of your hard work and kind hearts, and we wish you great success for the benefit of all concerned.

Foods that the Pantry is in need of at this time include:

gelatin
tuna
ground coffee
pancake mix
pancake syrup
instant mashed potatoes
rice sides
pasta sides
dinner helpers
fruit juice
ramen noodle soup
canned spaghetti
canned macaroni and beef
baked beans
cake and brownie mix.

Please extend our thanks to all those who work to make your effort a success.

Sincerely,
Don Campbell
Chairman, Valatie Ecumenical Food Pantry

From the Library:

Help make a difference! Support Our Food Drive in honor of Mr. Valentine's retirement and work in the community! We are collecting food for the Valatie Food Pantry: canned fruit, canned vegetables, macaroni & cheese, cold cereal, cans of tuna, cake mix, frosting, jelly, peanut butter, miscellaneous beans – pinto, black kidney etc., instant or cooked pudding, jell-o, ketchup and mayo. Send in donations to your student's homeroom teacher! Thank you!

"Get Your Read On" Book Cart is looking for middle school appropriate book donations! Students will have the opportunity to purchase books for 25 cents, receive coupons from teachers to receive a book or trade a book for a book. We are looking for nearly new and gently used books. Please bring any donations to Ms. Two-Axe in the MS Library.

From FACS (Mrs. Kuhn):

The 7th grade students researched and shared ways to make healthier choices when eating at fast food restaurants by using nutrition charts, math calculations and the food guide pyramid. Students converted the fat grams of each meal into tablespoons and teaspoons to create a fat content visual to use in their presentations.

The sixth & seventh grade FACS students have used measurement accuracy, safety, time management, team work and cleanliness to prepare nutritious foods in their culinary labs.

7th grade FACS students chose their vegetables to create a Stir-Fry with complex carbohydrates, unsaturated fat and lots of fiber. 6th graders prepared pancakes from scratch after using their math skills to double the recipe.



From the Nurse's Office – Spring Sports Sign-Ups:

Spring Sports Sign-ups have begun for Modified, JV and Varsity Sports. Permission forms may be obtained from Mrs. Sweeney or Mr. Nordgren. All permission forms must be returned to Mrs. Estabrook- Pollack, MS School Nurse, by **February 12, 2010 for JV & Varsity Sports & March 12, 2010 for Modified Sports.**

A sports physical is required to participate in the athletic program, including the first day of try-outs. Physicals are valid for 12 months. Students will be notified by the school nurse should a sports physical be necessary. The School Nurse will conduct a preliminary exam during the school day which consists of height, weight, blood pressure, and pulse and urine sample. Sports physicals will be conducted by a School Physician. Students requiring physicals will be scheduled by the nurse and given an appointment to meet with the School Physician prior to tryouts. If the student fails to keep the appointment, he/she must schedule an appointment with a District Physician at their own expense prior to tryouts.

Students with a valid sports physical will be interviewed by the nurse to update the health history and determine eligibility.

Middle School students interested in signing up for a sport that is higher than the modified level (i.e. JV or Varsity) must pass the NYS Selection Classification test prior to trying out. This test will be given Monday February 23rd @ 2:30 pm in the MS gym. The requirements vary for each sport. Students may see Mrs. Sweeney or Mr. Nordgren for sports standards.

Parents & Guardians are encouraged to remind students to submit permission forms to the Nurse prior to the February 12th for JV or Varsity Sports or March 12th for Modified Sports so appointment times may be scheduled.

From the Art Club:

The Ichabod Crane High School Art Club will host our 2nd Annual "Empty Bowls" Supper next week on Tuesday, February 2 from 4:30-6:30 pm in the ICHS cafeteria.

All are invited to enjoy a delicious simple meal at this community event and take home a ceramic bowl made by Ichabod Crane students. The bowl serves as a visible reminder that people go to bed hungry every night. Admission by donation includes handmade bowl, soup, bread, and beverage.

The ceramic bowls have been created by members of the Art Club at both the High School and the Middle School (Amanda Rodriguez, Leah Clifford, Emily Feight, Samantha Parsons, Rachel O'Leary, and Amelia Holbrook), along with students in Ceramics classes, and a group of 5th graders at Martin Van Buren Elementary School.

All proceeds from this "Empty Bowls" supper will benefit the Valatie Food Pantry, which serves the residents of Ichabod Crane School District. In case of bad weather, the snow date will be Thursday, February 4.

From the 8th Grade:

The eighth grade has been working hard this year on getting ready for the high school. One way we have been working toward this goal is by having our students work with the book The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Sean Covey. This book is based on the principles of Steven Covey's best selling book The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. Through the first half of the year we have focused on the first three habits which are: be proactive; keep the end in mind; and put first things first.

These habits really focus on helping students to take responsibility for their actions and decisions. The activities have centered on identifying areas that they can control and giving these students strategies to maintain control. Also, the students have spent time looking at their long-range goals and the steps that are necessary to achieve these goals. Finally, the students have looked at the steps they could take this week to get closer to their goals.

Our goal as a grade level is to try and give our students the skills and strategies that will help them to reach their goals in high school and beyond. Through our study of The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens we hope provide students with some concrete strategies and skills to grow and mature into successful adults. Please feel free to ask your kids about this class and what they have learned. As teachers, we have found that these strategies are really useful for adults too!



Future Cities:

On Saturday, January 16, the Ichabod Crane Future Cities Club competed against seventeen local middle schools in the regional Future Cities competition hosted by Hudson Valley Community College. The Future Cities Competition is held throughout the United States as part of National Engineers week and is designed to introduce middle school students to the engineering profession in a fun and educational format. Teams of 7th and 8th grade students completed a challenging multi-piece project based on this year's theme: providing affordable and renewable housing to those affected by a natural or financial disaster. In addition to creating a unique Future City concept and design, students worked on a SimCity model, wrote a 800-1,000 word essay, completed a city abstract, created a physical model of their city, and performed a brief presentation for the Future City judges.

The Ichabod Crane Future City Club consisted of fifteen students, working under the guidance of a teacher advisor and engineer mentor. Mr. Paul Greene served as the club's engineer mentor, offering advice and insights into the engineering profession. Ichabod Crane won two awards at this year's competition for their city, taking home the "Excellence in the Design of a City" and "Excellence in Low Impact Energy Generation and Use" awards.

Front row (left to right): Isaac Lester, Kyle Patzwahl, David Shank, Nathan Lester, Andrew Plourde, Maxson Freeman, Jenna Jennings, Emily Feight.

Back row (left to right): Allison Firmbach, Mr. Greene (Engineer Mentor), Marissa Vecellio, Isaiah Greene, Mr. Brewer (Teacher Advisor)

Not Pictured: Sara O'Leary, Jessica Hotaling, Samantha Parsons, Kyra Scott



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Non-Discrimination Compliance Statement

The Ichabod Crane Central School District hereby advises students, parents, employees, and the general public that it offers educational opportunities including vocational opportunities without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, handicap or religion. Inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy may be directed to: Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Officer, Maureen VanDeusen, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Ichabod Crane Central School District, Valatie, NY 12184 (518) 758-7575. A copy of the "In Compliance with Section 1.4 (a)" is available in the Superintendent's Office.

Happy Valentine's Day!

Upcoming Events:

February

- 2 - BOE Meeting, 7:00 PM
- 3 - Grade 8 Orientation Program, 6:30 PM HS
- St. Jude's Mathathon Kickoff Assembly
- 4 - Report Cards Go Home
- 5 - Activity Night, 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
- 10 - PTA Meeting, 6:30 PM
- 15-19 - **NO SCHOOL**, Winter Recess
- 25 - Shared Decision Making Mtg., 6:30 PM
- 27 - 3rd Quarter Interim Ends