EDITORIAL:

Welcome back everyone, and Happy New Year! Some people like to make goals for the new year. In almost every country, people have celebrations to bring in the new year. In Spain, people eat 12 grapes at midnight to symbolize 12 months of good luck. In Japan, a whole week of preparations that include cleaning, paying debts, and solving disagreements takes place. The Dutch burn Christmas trees on the streets as a way to get rid of the old, and welcome the new. In the Philippines, traditions include throwing coins at the stroke of midnight to increase wealth for the coming year and jumping up high which is believed to cause a growth spurt. In this edition, we have even more pet photos, and much much more!

Happy reading!

Editor-In-Chief,

Matt
We dedicate this issue to . . .

Mrs. Becker’s dog, TJ, who passed away in November.

TJ has been in the paper numerous times. We will miss him.

and DORI Feador, Mrs. Robison’s beautiful cat who passed away in October.

This is Griffin and his 3-year-old English Bulldog, ROMEO.

Romeo weighs a mere 75 pounds, but he is so sweet and gentle.

He loves walks . . . and food! :)

This is Mrs. Capretta’s cat-in-the-hat, SADIE, and her 16-year-old dog, MYLO.
Ms. Hampel’s 9-year-old puggle, OPA!

Mrs. Pavic’s 3-year-old, 110-pound Golden Doodle (Golden Retriever & Poodle) WHILEY ROCCO PAVIC. He has a great personality and appetite!

This is Mrs. Becker’s new puppy, BOLT.

This is my dog, BAILEY. He is half maltese and half shitzu. We got him at Christmas in 2009. He loves sticking his head out the window in the car. His favorite person in my family is my mom or my brother. His favorite toy is his two squirrels (they are really a raccoon and cheetah with a bear head) but my mom calls them his squirrels. Once I was leaving for school and he jumped into my backpack! Bailey may not be a human, but he is part of our family and definitely MY favorite person in the family!

This is Brianna’s ferret, Bubbles.

by Jacquelyn
This is Paityn and Paul's two rescued dogs, Henry and Chloe.

Henry is a 4-year-old 82-pound English Setter/Lab mix. Henry loves people, especially kids. He doesn't lick to show affection, he hugs! If you ask “Does somebody need a hug?”, he will jump up and put his front legs around you. Chloe is a 2-year-old 42-pound English Springer Spaniel. Chloe loves to walk and play ball. When she sees you put on your shoes and coat, she will run and get her leash. Her main job is breaking up terrorist squirrel, rabbit and bird cells.

Brianna’s cat, Frankie

Mrs. Kalamasz’s 4-year-old pomeranians, Miley & Gidget

These are Jillian's kitties, Binky, Yoshy & Missy

This is AJ and his brindle boxer mix puppy, Max.
**CHIEF** is a 10-year-old, sorrel and white American Paint horse gelding that Mrs. Gerlack is training to be a trail horse. He is a big boy that likes to take naps lying down in his stall.

Ms. Liberatore’s 4-year-old black lab, **MAYA**.

Matt’s 4-year-old gourami fish, **MR. GOURAMI**. Matt was in the fourth grade when he got him.

This is Maxine’s 4-year-old schnoodle, **PUCK**, who likes to bark at squirrels and eat treats; and loves to sleep and snuggle.

This is Brian and his 4-month-old schnauzer **BEAR** and 3-year-old **MOOSE**.
When Ava was 2, the only thing she could say was meow, so this her 11-year-old cat, MEOW.

This is Elise and her 13-year-old lab, LUCKY.

**BREED FEATURE... THE NEWFOUNDLAND**

*By Aleksandra*

The Newfoundland dog is a master at long-distance swimming and has natural lifesaving instincts in water. They are a strong and big dog (weighing anywhere from 110 pounds to 176 pounds) with a heavy coat to help protect them from icy waters. Their Country of Origin is Canada/England. The Newfoundland today can compete in obedience, conformation, tracking, agility, draft and water tests, and carting. This breed of dog has coat colors that range from black, brown, gray, and white. They need their coat combed twice a week (and more grooming is necessary during shedding season). Also, Newfoundlands need quite a bit of space. They love the cold but not so much the hot weather. They have an expected life span of eight to ten years, and some major concerns for them would be SAS, pulmonic stenosis, elbow dysplasia, CHD, and gastric torsion. However, this breed of dog is naturally very patient, calm, easy-going, and extremely gentle. Newfoundlands have a sweet disposition and are devoted companions. They are an excellent and amiable dog breed. I'd recommend them to almost anyone -- IF you have the space for them!

This is a Newfoundland dog lying next to its combed-out seasonal undercoat.
WELCOME NEW STUDENTS . . .

Lilliana,  
Grade 6

Sara,  
Gr. 6

Paityn,  
Grade 7

Marquan, Grade 7 - No Photo Available

Maria, 8th Grader, is awarded Student of the 1st Quarter.

Congratulations!!

MY LIFE AS A MOVE STAR (SORT OF) by Joseph

Last summer I was with my dad at a meeting at Lakewood Public library. A man entered the room we were in and asked if anyone was interested in auditioning for a local movie they were trying to put together, they were holding auditions that evening for kids' roles. The movie is called “PAPA DON'T TAKE NO MESS”. It is a comedy about a group of bad kids growing up in a gospel setting, dealing with family issues. I thought I would just try out for the heck of it, since I was bored sitting at my dad's meeting. The role I tried out for was for Joseph Lewberg, the gangster, bad kid.

I waited and waited to hear if I made it, and then I just pretty much forgot about it. I figured I didn't get the part. Then about three months after I first auditioned, my dad got an email from one of the producers saying I got the part! I couldn't believe it!

Since that all happened, I've been attending rehearsals every Saturday. So far, we have only shot the promo. It turns out it is a very slow process! They are still trying to get the funding for the movie. It takes a lot of money to make a movie and get it out there. Once the promo is edited, it will be shown to the people they hope will give us the funding. Meanwhile, we still meet every Saturday to rehearse.

The people are from all different backgrounds and places, and they are all really nice. They said I might get paid if everything works out. That would be cool! Even if it doesn't happen and they don't get the funding, I have learned a lot about making movies and acting in them, too!
Mr. Laposky has been a teacher here for 20 years. He has two children; a nine-year-old daughter and a ten-year-old son. He has no pets; and when asked whether he liked animals, he thought for a moment and said, “Yes. Lightly seasoned and grilled.” His favorite subject is American History, and his favorite sport is football. His hobbies are camping, biking, and coaching his kids’ sports teams. His favorite place that he’s visited is Boston, Massachusetts because of all of its history. If he could have one wish, it would be for world peace, and the most significant people in his life are his mom and dad.

I had Mr. Laposky last year and he was awesome! When someone would ask when we would be playing the buzzer review game, he would tell us: “There are no games in here, just interactive educational activities.”

Mr. Laposky also told me about his life after school. He likes fishing and other outdoor activities, like camping. Mr. Laposky really enjoys coaching his kid’s sports teams. His son is ten years old and his daughter is nine. His wife is also a teacher and works in Westlake.

I really enjoy Mr. Laposky’s class because he gets kids to think differently. He’s also very respectful to kids and always wants to hear their opinion about the topics we discuss in class. Mr. Laposky makes Rocky River Middle School a great place to learn!
WHAT'S YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?

By: Joliet & Anna

Mrs. Gerlack - Not to make a New Year's Resolution.
Grace - Turn the TV off when I leave the room.
Kaumin - Exercise more. lol
Maddy - Not text as much.
Gina - To get better grades.
Nurse Capretta - To get healthy.
Kayla - Get faster in volleyball and get 6-pack abs.
Maddy - Do better in school, not text as much; and maintain flabs.
Mr. McCreight - I don't do that.

Mrs. Kobus (substitute teacher) - Work out more -- if you don't use it, you lose it!
Char - Grow an inch.
Elizabeth - Stop biting my nails.
Keller - Don't lie.

Maxine - Get more organized.
Lucas - Eat better.
Danny - Get a job.
Sophie - Stop blowing bubbles.
Olivia - Learn how to play the guitar.
Maire - visit my webkinz every day.
Lily - Make at least one 3-point shot during basketball season.
Tori - To have no injuries.
Johnny - Grow a foot and lose weight.
Michael - Be more attractive.
Troy - To be a model.
Sophie - To walk my dog more.
Kelley - To be nicer to my cat.

Mrs. Schmit - To not worry so much.
Mr. Hudec - To run more.
Mr. Chulik - Giving up cookies for a few months.
Mrs. Winterich - It's too late to make one now; waiting until next year.
Mrs. Stacey - To get more sleep.
Mrs. Rose - To turn off my cell phone in the evening during family time.
RRMS TALENT SHOW Nov. 23, 2011
Hosts – Clare & Maddie

Stage/Tech Crew
Stage Managers – Sarah & Makena
CD/Ipod tech – Lily
Sound – Jonah
Set – Shaun, George, Ariel, & Emily
Mics – Jasiah & Nick
House Managers – Maddie & Alicia
House Crew – Mary Kate, Megan, & Maddie
Donations collector – Jasmine
House Lights – Kelly, Olivia & Savannah

Cast for 2011 RRMS Talent Show
6th Guitarist – Harry – music from Green Day
8th Singer – Maria - “What Hurts the Most”
6th Singer – A.J. - “Keep Your Head Up”
6th Singer – Morgan - “One Step at a Time”
6th Singer – Musa - “Rhythm of Love”
6th Gymnasts – Mackenzie & Maddie
7th Singer – Olivia - “Desperado”
6th Singer and Pianist – Mary Beth - “Waitin’ Outside the Lines”
7th Dancers – Ava & Wesleigh “Somewhere in Brooklyn”
7th Poet – Katie - “Chaos” and “Cascade”
8th Singer – Marissa – “Price Tag”
7th Singer – Emily - “A Thousand Miles”
7th & 8th Karate – Kim & Lauren - “Can’t Take Me”
8th Singer – Marlee - “Only Hope” from “A Walk to Remember”
6th Singer – Katie - “Tomorrow” from “Annie”
6th Drummer – Will - Original Composition
6th Singer – Amanda - “Jar of Hearts”
8th Dancers – Julia & Marlee - “Nothing on Me”
8th Singer – Emma - “Moon River”
7th Singer – Bridget - “One and Only”
8th Dancers – Olivia & Hannah - “Gasoline”
7th Singer – Grace - “Defying Gravity” from “Wicked”
7th Singers – Sophie & Dana - “For Good” from “Wicked”
7th Dancer – Calista - “Daniel”
Some of the most talented kids in Rocky River Middle School were featured proudly at the 2011 Talent Show. Acts of all kinds showed off their skills before a crowd that packed the Commons. The acts included an electric guitarist, singers, a skit, gymnasts, dancers, a poet, karate, and a drummer. A special thanks goes to the stage/tech crew and to Mrs. Fancher who coordinated this great event. Congratulations to everyone who participated. It was a fun night!

Photos by Olivia

Rocky River Middle School Students Raise $1,511 Through St. Jude Math-A-Thon® to Help Kids Battling Cancer

Sixth grade math students recently participated in the St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital® Math-A-Thon program and raised $1,511 to help kids battling cancer and other deadly diseases. In the past 15 years of Math-A-Thon participation, the 6th grade math students have raised over $25,000! Mr. Ramirez and Mrs. Brabant coordinated the event through their math classes.

“We are so proud of our students for embracing Math-A-Thon and raising critical funds for St. Jude,” said Dave Opdycke, 6th grade coordinator of the event. “Every dollar raised will help support the St. Jude mission of finding cures and saving children in communities worldwide.”

Since its inception more than 30 years ago, Math-A-Thon has become one of America’s largest education-based fundraisers. More than 10,000 schools across the country participate in the program every year. Math-A-Thon is also one of the most successful fundraising campaigns for St. Jude, having raised nearly $400 million since its inception.

St. Jude has teamed up with Scholastic Inc. to make Math-A-Thon a more valuable resource for teachers as they prepare students for standardized testing. The print and online versions of Math-A-Thon Funbooks contain colorful activities developed by Scholastic. The activities support National Standards and are aligned to the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) focal points for each grade level from K–8. The online version of the Funbook allows students to complete grade-specific activities like those offered in the print version but in an engaging game format that tracks points for the student.

Did It Break?

What is Mr. Chulik doing on top of the roof? Well...

one might call it an introduction to engineering. Once a year, Mr. Chulik’s 8th grade science classes conduct an egg drop experiment and learn about force, velocity, speed, momentum, unbalanced forces, Newton’s laws, and aspects of gravity by making an apparatus to protect an egg that drops from 25 feet off the roof. This particular experiment can get pretty messy, but it sure was a lot of fun! The record for the smallest device with the egg NOT breaking this year was 8.5 centimeters. Impressive!!!
Challenge Day was a special day and experience for 7th graders. All students learned to realize they are not alone facing problems at home or outside of the home. It was a fun and emotional day. Everyone spent time with friends and learned more about other people. It was a day that changed your opinions and a day you would never forget. Everyone should get a chance to have a Challenge Day. A special thank you goes to Mr. Cain for organizing this program and also to the countless other volunteers who helped.

Mr. Cain hosted the 8th annual Challenge Day Night at the Movies on Friday, November 4th, from 6:00 until 8:30 p.m. on the RRMS Commons Big Screen. Showing was the movie You Again which follows the life of a girl who was bullied in school only to face her tormentor years later when her brother becomes engaged to the “bully”.

Walking down the 7th grade hallway, one would see lockers decorated with:

* Invite someone new to eat lunch with you and your friends.
* Say hello to ten new people.
* Do something nice for someone without them knowing it.
* Say you’re sorry to someone you know you’ve hurt in the past.
* Share at least three intentional compliments with people at school today.
* Write a card or letter thanking someone you love.
* Give an unexpected gift to someone.
* Thank a teacher or other adult for making a difference in your life.
On November 21st, in Ms. Dye’s science lab class, we were supposed to create different substances and one of them was goop. Our lab made our goop and decided to do something really fun! We made mustaches and beards and we had a terrific time! The recipe for goop is: 30 ml of glue and 30 ml of borax. You pour 30 ml of glue into one corner of a ziplock bag. Then you pour in 30 ml of borax and then zip the ziplock bag. Next, knead the glue and the borax until it makes a playdough substance and then take it out and have a lot of fun.
Red Ribbon Week . . . 10/24-28/11
This year’s theme was “Don’t let FEAR be your guide; Do the Right Thing!”

FALSE
EVIDENCE
APPEARING
REAL

Red ribbon week is a week long celebration of commitment to encourage kids in our community to make healthy choices, good decisions and to live drug-free lives!

Monday, October 24: “Friends are to Pull You Up, Not Down”

Dress Up Day - Twin/Triplet/Quadruplet Day
(friends dress alike to show they are going to support each other “doing the right thing”.)
Tuesday, October 25: “Why do we Celebrate Red Ribbon Week?”

Dress Up Day – Red Ribbons Day – How creative can you get wearing red ribbons? (headbands, ties, bracelets, etc.)
Red Ribbons Day (Continued) . . .

Wednesday, October 26: “Safe and Healthy Students Learn More and Live Better”

**Dress Up Day** – Wear your neon and fluorescent clothes to show everyone that you are safe and healthy.
WINTER EDITION 2012

Thursday, October 27: “FEAR is only False Evidence Appearing Real”

**Dress Up Day** - Don’t have FEAR, and be different. Wear your wackiest hairstyle and clothes! Get creative!
Friday, October 28: “Spirit Day”

**Dress Up Day** – Rocky River Colors (maroon/white or red/white)

Thanks to all of you for your participation!

Mrs. Stacey
IRAQI WAR VETERAN VISITS 6TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSES

by Alek

We all know November 11, Veteran’s Day, is a special occasion to honor the brave people who help protect our country and have served in the military. This past Veteran’s Day, Mr. Laposky organized a very special guest to visit with the sixth grade social studies classes, Mr. Tim Matanick, Mr. Laposky’s brother-in-law and former Marine who served our country in the Iraq war.

Mr. Matanick came to tell the sixth graders about what it is like to be a Marine. “Before you can become a Marine, you must complete training camp (boot camp),” Mr. Matanick explained. It took him 13 weeks of intense training before he could become a Marine. He feels that the most anticipated thing at the camp was the gas room, where a type of tear gas is released in a crowded room, and when the 13 weeks ended, Mr. Matanick became a U.S. Marine.

Many people think that all the military does is fight in wars, but that isn’t always true. Mr. Matanick’s job was to help search for criminals and terrorists in Iraq. Every day Mr. Matanick would go around the harsh desert climate of Iraq with many other Marines and search through houses for people who were involved in terrible things like acts of terrorism and people who are involved in troublesome groups.

Unfortunately, Mr. Matanick’s term in Iraq ended when a missile exploded and some debris got stuck in his leg. He had to end his term short and return home to heal. Luckily, Mr. Matanick is doing great today! He is feeling better and his leg has recovered.

Mr. Matanick was happy with all the new people he met in the Marines and he was proud to have supported his country and to protect the freedoms we enjoy every day. Because of the brave people in the world like Mr. Matanick, you’re able to live in a country like America with many rights and freedoms we take for granted. These heroes fight to protect your freedom and rights and pay a steep price, some giving their very life. That’s why a holiday like Veteran’s Day is so important to remember and honor.

It’s important to honor our veterans. They risk their lives for you. Mr. Matanick could have been hurt even more seriously or killed. After hearing Mr. Matanick speak, the 6th grade class had a much deeper understanding of the risk and dedication our armed forces withstand in their daily lives. We all thanked Mr. Matanick for serving our country and coming to speak to our classes! If you know a veteran, make sure to tell them “thank you” for risking their life to protect our beautiful, wonderful, fair country!

THANK YOU, VETERANS!

THE SCIENCE OF SUPER HEROES...

Mr. Chulik’s Science classes spent a few days learning about ‘The Science of Super Heroes’. Topics that the students learned about included gravity, force, mass, acceleration, the electromagnetic spectrum, the law of conservation of energy, potential energy, kinetic energy, Einstein’s theory of relativity, the speed of electromagnetic waves, radiation, sound, sound’s speed in different mediums, the speed of light, earthquake causes, absence of sound in a vacuum, Newton’s laws, plate tectonics, time travel, and friction.

To conclude this learning experience, students took a quiz on these topics, and also had the chance to invent their own super hero. Inventing their own super hero also required that the students took a scientific look at how they obtained their ‘super powers’.

If students want to take their experience a step further, please have them check out the books ‘THE PHYSICS OF SUPERHEROES’ and ‘THE PHYSICS OF SUPERHEROES PART 2’. Both books are by James Kakalios. He is a professor at the University of Minnesota who actually teaches a science course on the Physics of Super Heroes. The website is: http://www.physicsofsuperheroes.com/

THOR & CAPTAIN AMERICA
OUR ART GALLERY . . .

by Yara

by Amanda

by Diana
LOOK WHO’S READING . . .
For this year's **Right-to-Read-Week** (November 28th-December 2), there was a contest to see if you could identify the staff member that was reading in each picture. It was open to any student in the middle school and the winners could choose any book that they wanted from the book fair as a prize. There were three winners from each grade level. See the next page for the winners. How well did you do?

*By Matt.*
LOOK WHO’S READING ANSWER KEY
From left to right:
Row 1 - Mr. Laposky, Mrs. Callentine, Mrs Pavic, & Mrs. Doran
Row 2 - Mrs. Weber, Mrs. Stacy, Mr. Fowler & Mr. England
Row 3 - Mrs. Crites, Mrs. Lakatos, Mr. McCreight, & Mrs. Blazevic
Row 4 - Mrs. Becker, Ms. Brown, Ms. Liberatore, & Mr. Waltjen
Row 5 - Mrs. Schmit, Mr. Chulik, Mrs. Liskovec, & Mr. Smith
Row 6 - Mrs. Rowe, Mrs. Wodzisz, Ms. Salvagni, Mrs. Winterich, & Mrs. Juhasz
Row 7 - Mr. Lambert, Mrs. Robison, Mrs. Miller, & Mrs. Kasick
Row 8 - Mrs. Konrad, Mr. Zerbey, Ms. Hampel, & Mrs. Owens
Row 9 - Mrs. Lampp, Mr. Opdycke, Mrs. Opett, & Mrs. Brabant
Row 10 - Mr. Ramirez & Mrs. Rose

Congratulations to the 9 winners of this contest . . .

6th Grade:
Haddi
Dorian
Hanna

7th Grade:
Anthony
Maeve
Brennen

8th Grade:
Ellie
Arden
Brian

And a big congratulations to the 3 NOOK winners:

Mihalina
Maire
Annie

The winner of the “Celebrations Around the World” contest was Shuchi. Congratulations!

Book Fair Dec. 6 - 9, 2011

Photo Caption Above: Mrs. Miller, Max, Ryan, Waheeb, Ian, and Michael display their favorite books from the Book Fair in December.

Photo Caption Below: The classes of Mrs. Callentine, Mrs. Miller, Ms. Brown, and Mrs. McNeely run the book fair twice a year. Two students, Ryan and Waheeb are pictured working at the register at RRMS. Students purchased many books this year. The best seller was the new Diary of a Wimpy Kid novel. The book fair raised nearly $1,000 for Special Olympics that the school participates in.
On December 7th, 2011 a group of 8th graders in Mr. England's technology classes were offered the chance of going on a field trip to Hyland Software. Although there was only a limited amount of spots for students on the trip, I was one of the students selected to go. We left the school shortly after mods 1, 2. When our group arrived at Hyland, we were greeted by a woman in their HR department. First, they treated us to breakfast and they gave us all Hyland cups filled with candy and other small items. As we ate, they introduced their software company to us. We were shown a presentation of all their different options they offer their clients, some of their major clients, and their internship program. Some of Hyland Software’s major clients include the Cleveland Clinic, the Browns, and more. Students in high school are able to apply for an internship at Hyland in one of their many departments. They have two different slides in their main building and we were able to ride one of them named the “silver bullet”. Then, we were split up into two groups and taken on a tour around their many departments. Their cubicles were split into different sections for the departments, and inside of those sections there were teams of about ten people. When both groups were finished with their tours, we got paired up and put with one of their workers. Each group got to spend a specific amount of time with their person and learn about what they do and ask questions. My partner and I were put with a worker in quality assurance. It was very interesting. After we finished shadowing, we were treated to pizza for lunch and were on our way back to school. Our bus brought us back to school at about 1:00 in the afternoon. Overall, the trip was very fun and interesting.
This month, RRMS 6th graders have been reading *A Christmas Carol* in their Language Arts classes. The story by Charles Dickens involves a grumpy old man who lives in the 1800’s in London, England. He was a very mean man. On one Christmas, he is visited by the ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present, and Christmas Future. These ghosts change his idea of life and put his priorities in order. He then is nice to everyone. On Wednesday the 14th, the 6th graders went to see the play of this book after previously reading it. They then wrote poems about each of the stave/chapters of the book. *A Christmas Carol* has been read by the 6th graders of RRMS for many years, each class then going to see the play afterwards. The book reading and play watching is a great way to get the 6th graders of RRMS into the Christmas spirit.

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**Student Council’s Holiday Adopt-A-Family Project . . .**

Students organized a holiday drive to buy 27 coats for families in need over the holidays. A big THANKS goes out to all who participated!

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**Christmas Carol Poem**

*By Anthony*

Scrooge saw a ghost on his door
He was so afraid he almost fell to the floor

The ghost was so creepy
He made Scrooge go pee-pee

The ghost informed him that there would be 3 more
Then he quickly pointed at the door

Scrooge took a trip to the past
Having everything but a blast

He saw Fan, Fezziwig, and Belle, too
He said, “Take me home, I beg of you!”

Scrooge didn’t want to be defiant
So he obeyed the jolly giant

He traveled throughout the town
But returned with a frown

The final ghost was dark and hooded
To the future Scrooge was putted

Scrooge was dead, as well as Tiny-Tim
He was afraid that the fate would follow him

Scrooge returned without anger
The whole town escaped from danger

Scrooge was no longer jerky
And decided to buy the Crachits a turkey
Now you have heard about the legend of Santa Claus? If so, then you have to be familiar with the phrase “He’s making a list, he’s checking it twice,” or “He sees you when you’re sleeping, he knows when you’re awake.” This is pure fantasy, right? Well, that is where you’re wrong. He has spies, they are known as The Elf on the shelf. They are pixie-like in appearance and can move around to different locations in your home. One of their favorite places to rest is . . . you guessed it . . . on a shelf!

Before the elf can visit you, you must first purchase him/her and the book that comes in the same package. Then you and your family gather around and read the book. Once this is done, the magic is released and your elf is free to move about to observe your activities.

This is a fun family tradition that’s been done since our mom was a child. In the morning, my sister and I race to be the first to find them. I (Paul) have the elf with the darker hair, his name is Buddy, and he is named after the character Will Ferrell played in the movie of the same name. And I (Paityn) have the elf with the lighter hair, his name is Arthur. He is named after the character Russell Brand, played in the movie of the same name.

You wouldn’t believe some of the places we’ve seen our elves end up. For example, one day we found them helping each other move from the top of our Christmas tree. Another time, they were in one of the cabinets with the candy we received for St. Nick’s night. They can be purchased at Target or Hallmark. Please note they usually make their appearance after Thanksgiving. Happy Holidays, everyone!
Chamber Choir performs at Lakewood Hospital
On December 8th, the Chamber Choir was invited to sing at the hospital’s Employee Appreciation Day. They have performed there every year for the past 5 or 6 years. It’s a fun gig! (Even Santa wanted in on the act!) The employees were very appreciative.

Jazz Band Performs for Students during Lunch on December 21st.
The Rocky River Middle School Jazz Band

By Siwei

I’m sure many of you have heard of the Jazz Band already. Its name should basically tell you everything. Everyone goes to sign up for tryouts in the middle of the 1st Quarter. If you want to know more on tryouts and participation, check out Mr. Hudec’s Q&A. Then, you go through a screen test to determine if you’ve got what it takes. If you do, congratulations, you’re in! If not, don’t be afraid to try again next year or at the high school if you’re an 8th grader.

Every Wednesday night, all the members congregate at 7:00-8:30 (6:30 for sectionals) in the RRMS band room. If you’d like more information, check out Colin’s Q&A. There, we get to play really cool jazz pieces from the slow, smooth, lyrical “Let it snow, Let it snow, Let it Snow” to the rhythm-filled and totally awesome “Area 51”. If you’d like more information on music, check out Margo’s and David’s Q&A. Within the Jazz Band itself are a variety of instruments including: Alto, Tenor, and Bari Saxophones, Trumpets/Cornets, Trombones, Bass Trombones, Euphonium, Marimbas, Drum Set, Piano, Guitar, Bass Guitar, and an occasional flugelhorn. I don’t think I missed anything. If you’d like more on instruments, check out Andrew’s Q&A.

Mr. Hudec is our director, and all of you probably know him pretty well. He’s an absolutely amazing person to get to know. He pushes us to go beyond our comfort zone and play our best. He teaches us to work together to gather the real feel of the piece. His high expectation makes everyone so good at their instrument. He’s got a great sense of humor, he’s a very inspirational person, always busy, and sweats a lot when he’s nervous. If you’d like someone else’s opinion, check out Anna Brandt’s Q&A.

Unlike in Concert Band, in Jazz Band, you get to play solos if you feel ready where it’s just you playing with the rest of the band backing you up as accompaniment. Really, you feel so good after the audience claps after you’re finished. If you don’t feel like it, you don’t have to do it. If you’d like more on how it feels to do a solo, check out Margo’s and Sophie’s Q&A. During more formal or special events, everyone gets these uniforms to wear. That includes your usual concert attire along with a white ruffled tuxedo, patterned blue tux vest, and patterned blue bow tie. Although it’s not the most comfortable clothing to be in, it really does show that you’re part of the RRMS Jazz Band and you should be proud of that.

There are several advantages to joining Jazz Band. First of all, it gives you the opportunity to play at all concert band performances regardless of your grade (age-wise, not your report card). It gives you the chance to play during a few lunch periods for your classmates. You get to go to the Jazz Festival where different schools compete and you get the opportunity to sell refreshments and compete. Then, there’s the visit to Kensington that’s always nice to see old faces again. Best of all, near the end of the year, there is a whole-day trip to Cedar Point; where in the morning you compete, and after that, for about 7 hours, you run around, ride roller coasters, eat lunch, and stand in line for the Top Thrill Dragster line to thin down and then get a 5-second ride. In the evening, you hear your competition results and we got first place last year for “Music in the Parks”! If you’d like more information on events, check out Jacob’s Q&A.

I hope that whether you are nervous or not, you try out. You may not get in, but you’re just as good as anyone else because you tried -- and that’s all that matters! If you’d like more information, check out Alex’s and John’s Q&A. Yes, the expectations are high, but getting to those expectations is really an accomplishment, and you should be sincerely proud of yourself! Please continue reading the next few pages of Q&As with several of the Jazz Band Members and Mr. Hudec and the special thanks page.

Q&A with Jacob:

Q: “Every year, there are certain special events (as described above). Which is your favorite and why?”
A: “My favorite special event… uhh is the lunch performance where we perform live in the commons… during lunch periods. It’s during Christmas break, and in between, we get to eat pizza and pop.”

Q: Now you say this is your favorite, now why is that?

A: “Well… one, you get to miss some school; two, you get to shove your mouth with pizza and pop. And… I forgot what I was going to say! Oh yeah, it’s really fun because you can hang out with your friends.”

Q&A with Margo:

Q: “What is your favorite piece so far? Why do you like it? What is it like to you?”

A: “Umm… my favorite piece in Jazz Band is ‘No Problema!’, it’s actually from last year and… it’s really fun ‘cause there’s cool rhythms and stuff and… it just sounds really cool.

Q: “And… what do you think it’s like to play it onstage? Have you ever had a solo in the piece?”

A: “No, I don’t like doing solos. But, I’ve done a few and umm… it’s really fun doing it onstage because you know a lot of the audience likes it and it just sounds really good.”

Margo, Tenor Saxophone

Q&A with Alex:

Q: “What do you think is the best part of Jazz Band and why?”

A: “Being with your friends… that’s just awesome… and it’s fun.”

Q: “How do you feel about playing onstage in an elite group?”

A: “It’s fun… everyone’s good.”

Q: “So your only adjective is ‘fun’?”

A: “Uhhh… it’s awesome… and fun.”

Q: “Now let’s say some 6th graders are willing to join - would you suggest they do?”

A: “Yes… Yep… Yeah, it’d be a lot of fun!”

Q&A with Colin:

Q: “What do you think is the best part of Jazz Band and why?”

A: “Uhh… I think the best part of Jazz Band is the rehearsals because I think it’s kind of fun for an hour and a half to play music that you like to play.”

Q: “So, that’s it?”

A: “I’m thinking so.”

Colin Trudell, Trumpet (sorry, it shows a French Horn in the photo)
Q&A with Sophie:

Q: “If you have played a solo, how do you feel about doing so; and if not, how would you feel/want to feel, and why?”

A: “Umm... I’ve played a solo and it’s really nerve wracking but, once you get through it, you feel accomplished; and it’s really fun!”

Q: “Have you ever messed up on a solo? If you have, how did you feel then?”

A: “Yes, I have, because my first valve (that’s the button closest to the player’s lips) was broken, and I knew I could do better so I was upset.”

Q&A with Anna:

Q: “Do you think Mr. Hudec does a good job directing and why?”

A: “Yes, because he makes it very fun and he doesn’t get angry... and, he tells us what to do to get better.”

Q&A with John:

Q: “If a kid were good at an instrument and nervous about joining the Jazz Band, would you suggest that they join?”

A: “Well, yeah, because I was nervous; but I think if you think you’re going to be good, then you should just join, because if you think you’re good, you probably have a good chance – because you probably are good!”

Q: So it’s all about confidence, right?”

A: “Yeah.”

Q&A with David:

Q: “If you could play any song in the entire world at Jazz Band for one week, what would it be?”

A: “Take the 'A' Train”.

Q: “And who’s the artist?”

A: “Originally by Duke Ellington.”

Q: “Duke Ellington!? You’d play that piece?”

A: “Yep.”

Q: Why would you play that? What makes it your chosen piece?”

A: “Uhhh... I don’t know - I like it!”

Q&A with Andrew:

John, Baritone Saxophone, poses for the photo with an absolutely charming smile

Andrew, Trumpet
Q: “If you could add one instrument into the band, what would it be and why?”

A: “Could you give me a minute to think... wait... I think we should add a soprano saxophone because they umm... it adds a lot more, like... I mean, the alto saxophone and the tenor saxophone can play high, but it gets kind of squeaky when they do, and I think it would improve the tone quality, and it would add another part of harmony that would just increase how good it is (Sophie implies a suggestion)... yeah... ok... and it’s fun and awesome!”

Q&A with Stewart:

Q: “If you had the choice, would you make the group more select or open?”

A: “I would keep the group more select because everyone already has the free choice to be in band, but the Jazz Band is supposed to be very talented so the select people should be able to join.

Q: “So, you don’t think the group is already talented enough?”

A: “It is. I like it the way it is. It should not be more open than it already is.”

Me: “Okay, you just contradicted yourself, but I’ll take both viewpoints. Thank you very much.”

Q&A with Mr. Hudec:

Q: “What criteria do you use to accept new members into the Jazz Band, and how do you think of that?”

A: “Uhh... every year, we have tryouts, and I give them music that they have to try out for; and then I rate them, and depending on who we need for that year, that’s who we take. But everyone has a set piece of music to try out on, and that’s what they try out on.

Q: “So, what are your standards for how you get in?”

A: “Well, work ethic and, you know, just... you know, if they’re able to take the piece of music I give them and work it up on their own, that says to me that they’re able to work on their own and will work on the Jazz Band music that we play.”
I would like to take the time to thank the following people/groups of people for everything they’ve done:

1. Mrs. Owens and the newspaper staff: Without them, this newspaper would not even exist.

2. The Q&A subjects because they make this article so much more interesting to read and gives you an insight of more than my opinions on the Jazz Band.

3. Mr. Hudec for his work in all musical-related affairs in the RRMS and for his amazing directing skills that allows the Jazz Band to be formed and play so well.

4. Everyone in the RRMS Jazz Band for just the wonderful people that they are and for all of their positive support and a subject to write about.

5. Last but not least, all of you people who read the newspaper so that my work is read by many people in the hopes that they find an interest in the Jazz Band.
**MY TRIP TO INDIA**

*By Shuchi*

Where is India?
India is located on the continent of Asia. It is a peninsula. A peninsula is a body of land surrounded by water on three sides.

We went to many places in India. We went to these states:
- Maharashtra (Muh - haa - raa - shtra)
- Gujarat (Guj - uh - raat) and
- Rajasthan (Raaj - uhs - than)

My trip to India was a wonderful experience! On December 9th, me, my brother Rahul (4), my mom, and my dad left and landed on the night of the 10th at Mumbai.

We went to the wedding of my 2nd cousin the next day. Her name is Ritu (Rit - oo) and she is 21 years old. I was really sleepy right before the main part of the wedding because of jet lag. The venue had wonderful decor, with real colorful flowers. The food was delicious. We met a lot of relatives and had lots of fun. Then, we went to many temples, three in Maharashtra and four in Gujarat. One of them in Gujarat, called Girnar, has 10,000 steps to the temple. But we only climbed 5,000 steps at which there was a temple, too.

The next two days we stayed at my paternal grandparents’ house and had a chance to rest. The 3rd day we all went to my maternal grandparents’ house in Rajasthan. My mom’s brother lives with my maternal grandmother. We stayed there for six days. We had an extremely warm welcome. Other than meeting my grandmother, uncle, aunt, and two cousins, we also met my mom’s older brother, his wife, and two kids who live in Australia. My younger uncle’s kids are Kritika (Kini) (Kri - ti - kaa (Ki - nii) (11) and Ameya (Am - ey) (6). My older uncle’s kids are Lokesh (Lo - ke - sh) (15) and Dharmesh (Dh - ur - me - sh) (12). We also celebrated Lokesh’s birthday on the 21st. After two days my dad and paternal grandparents went back to their house. For the rest of the six days we went to Indianized American restaurants such as McDonalds and Dominoes. We went to another temple and went to two big parks or gardens. The 7th day my family and my older uncle’s family went to another city in Rajasthan. My dad and his parents got reunited with us on the way and we went to another temple. We met Ritu and her family again since she came back from her husband’s house for her little brother Harshit’s (Hu - rsh - it) (15) birthday. We went to three relatives’ houses that day. We also went to my maternal grandmother’s brother’s house. There were a lot of 2nd cousins that I met there, too. My grandmother had organized a dinner to meet all the other relatives we didn’t meet earlier. After tearful goodbyes, we left the next morning to my dad’s silver jubilee college alumni. That lasted for two days. We had a good time there as well. We went back to my dad’s parents’ house and drove with them to Jaipur. We met one more relative and my grandparents dropped us off at the airport. Finally, our trip came to an end and we left India. Our flight home was hectic because we switched four planes, Jaipur to Mumbai, Mumbai to Zurich, Switzerland, Zurich to Chicago, and Chicago to Cleveland. I hope to go back really soon! Here are some pictures we took.

This is alumni picture in front of medical college.
Family picture taken at a palace now restaurant.

This is the wedding stage decorated with real flowers.

This is Grandpa, Grandma, Mom, Rahul and Dad

This is me, Kritika, Lokesh, Dharmesh, Amey, & Rahul picture of warm welcome.

This is me and my mom in lengha, Rahul, and paternal relatives.

This is Ritu, whose wedding we went to.
In early December, I traveled to Portugal with my father, aunt and 85-year-old grandmother. We landed in Lisbon, Portugal, after a long, exhausting trip overseas.

Lisbon is the largest city in Portugal and also its capital. Lisbon is one of the oldest cities in the world, pre-dating many other European capitals such as London, Paris and Rome. Lisbon is a multi-cultural city, rich in many different architectural styles - Romanesque, Gothic, Baroque, and Modern styles.

We visited the Basilica of St. Anthony, Tower of Belem, Jeronimos Monastery and the Monument to the Discoveries. I felt like a time traveler, visiting so many historical sites.

After Lisbon, we traveled to a small, rural town called Fatima. Fatima was our "home away from home" for the next week. Every year, millions of people from all over the world come to Fatima on pilgrimages. Pilgrimages are journeys to sacred places for religious motives. In some religious views, Fatima is considered a sacred place where, in 1917, three shepherd children witnessed miracles.

Fatima is a very "old world" town, with narrow, winding cobblestone streets, lined with olive trees. The buildings and homes in Fatima are simple and humble, in contrast to the grandeur of the Shrine of Fatima and the Basilica. The people of Fatima are hard working, humble and kind.

I ate a lot of fish in Portugal. Fish, especially cod, is a mainstay in the Portuguese diet. Espresso, not Starbucks, is the coffee of choice in Portugal.

Unlike the U.S., there is no Sunday "football" in Portugal. But, soccer games are televised 24/7 in Portugal! The Portuguese are huge soccer fans!

We visited the town of Tomar. In Tomar, we toured a fortified castle, which was built in 1160 A.D. The kings of Portugal lived in the castle until the monarchy was overthrown in 1906.

We traveled to a Nazare, a colorful fishing village on the coast of Portugal. The cliffside views of the Atlantic Ocean were spectacular. The beaches were empty, but in high season, the coast is a very popular tourist destination.

My journey to Portugal was an experience that I will never forget.

Photographs:
Hello! Bonjour! Kon’nichiwa! ¡Hola! Nín hào! I’m back! And this time I’m a bit more organized with the story. As in I have a steady beginning. And I never knew that I could say hello in so many languages. Well, so far I have two new characters in mind and though they’re, as-far-as-I-know, near uselessness, I need them. So, enjoy.

I had been reading in the reading room. It had been three days since I first came here, and I felt like this place was my home. Plus I was very lucky since I only had to share a bathroom with Lily. Nothing in the way of taking my time, since I usually let her go first.

There was a knock at the door, and I got up to answer it. When I did, I saw two men there. The taller one had wavy, face-framing blonde hair, what looked like a five o’clock shadow, and blue eyes. His companion was a man with thick - and I mean thick - black eyebrows, messy blonde hair, and green eyes.

“Ah! François, I told you we were heading to the sororities!”, the smaller man said. He was obviously British.

“Oohnhon. But isn’t it all right, secousse?” the man named François said.

“No. It’s not. But anyways, I’m Arthur. It’s a pleasure to meet you,” Arthur said.

“I’m Abbygail. Do you need directions?”, I asked.

“Ah, oui, mon chéri. We could use some, uh, directions,” François said.

I caught on to what he was saying, and I just gave him that look. Y’know, the look you give someone when you want to move on, but you want to slap them, and you also want to say something nasty. Squinting at François, I asked, “Where’re you heading?”

“To Fraternity 2,” Arthur said, sending a slight glare to the Frenchman.

“Just walk down till you see a house, then keep walking; when you see the one that looks like yours, go to the front door and knock. If one of your frat bros answer, then it’s yours,” I said. I really couldn’t give them any better directions.

“Thanks,” Arthur said as him and his companion began to walk away.

Settling back down in the reading room, I thought, ‘WHY do all these guys have to be so hot?’

“Who was at the door?”, Eduard asked.

“Arthur and François,” I said.

Eduard looked a little...irritated, I guess. Going back to my book, I heard Ivan and his sisters (Natalya and his unnamed older sister) enter the house. You can always hear them coming since they have a tendency to be a little loud, not to mention the side door slams.

“Natalya, please, let go of me,” Ivan said uncomfortably. I had learned that she was a ball of sticky stress for him. I had also learned that she was adopted from Belarus.

“But Дары́ Брать! I love you!”, Natalia said.

“And I love you, too. But you don’t have to grab onto me that much,” Ivan said. I had wanted to get to know him, er, his sisters a bit more, so I chose that moment to intervene.

“Hello,” I said, trying to keep my cool as I walked around the corner. Natalya glared at me, but she glared even harder when she saw Ivan smile warmly at me.

“Hello. Who are?!”, Natalya asked in a slightly frantic manner.

“I’m Abbygail. I’m the new fraternity member. It’s a...pleasure to meet you,” I said, trying to use every ounce of proper etiquette I had. Natalya glared at me, but before she could say something that I can only assume would be nasty, Ivan’s big sister said, “Oh! Hello! I’m Yekaterina. But you can call me Katyusha.”

Nodding to the slightly puzzling name, I tried to continue some form of conversation.

“So...uh, Natalya was adopted from Belarus...so, were you...Katyusha?”, I asked.

“No, I was adopted from Ukraine,” Katyusha said.

“Ah. You guys sure are colorful,” I said.

“Да, but our parents were Russian. So we all lived in Russia,” Ivan said, his voice wearsome. I couldn’t tell if it was from Natalya shooting daggers at me or if it was from mention of his parents.

“And here’s a fun fact, at one point, Toris and I lived by Ivan, Katyusha, and Natalya. We were friends before meeting up here,” Eduard said, coming into the kitchen.

“Don’t forget Raivis,” Mathew said, his airy voice floating in from the door way. Matt and I have been getting along better since the first day I came here. I seem to be the only person who acknowledges his existence. Y’know, like, half the time.

“Who’s that?” I asked.

But before I got my answer, I heard the front door close and Toris was talking to someone. This new person
had an accent I hadn’t heard before, and I wondered where they were from.

“That’s Raivis,” Eduard said, pointing to a smaller, no, he was downright tiny, man with dirty-blonde hair, pale skin and large, pleading, baby blue eyes.

“O-oh. Hello. I d-don’t t-think we’ve m-met. I-I’m R-R-Raivis,” he said extending a violently shaking hand. I shook it, and my hand started to vibrate with his.

“I’m Abigail. If you don’t mind me asking, what country are you from?” I asked.

“Latvia. O-one of t-the three B-Baltic st-states,” Raivis stated with a hint of pride in his stuttering voice.

“Ah,” I said. I knew a little about the Baltic States. They’re Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. They’d be the ‘Baltic Union’, but, they don’t get along. And by definition, a union is a group of states or countries that want to be together.

“Well...I think we should get to studying,” Toris said. But before they could get far, the phone rang.

“I’ll get that,” Ivan said. He attempted to get his arm out of Natalya’s grip, but it proved to be a futile effort. Dragging his little sister along, Ivan answered the phone. After a total of maybe three seconds, he rolled his eyes and looked even more peeved, if that was possible. He continued to listen and roll his eyes but eventually cut off the person on the other end.

“Feliks...no...why don’t you talk to Tor about that,” Ivan said.

“Who’s Feliks?” I asked. I had made it my secret mission to meet my frat brothers’ friends. And that was fairly easy to do since everyone was so close. The hard part was the fact that there are so many of them.

“An irritating Pole who just can’t seem to understand the school’s dress code.” Natalya and Matt said in unison.

“Anything else?”, I hesitantly asked.

“He loves pink and ponies,” Eduard said walking out of the kitchen, and I heard him explaining a calculus problem to Katysusha.

‘Geeze,’ I thought. ‘Seems like all you have time to do around here is study.’

Toris got to the phone, but before he could even say hello, there was a loud kicking at the door and someone came in.

“Torry! I’m, like, totally here! I was, like, totally going to come here without, like, totally calling first, but, uhn, there, like totally might be girls over!”, a Polish man called out.

Toris gave him a confused look and asked, “What makes you say that?”

“Because I, like, totally here one of you guys, like, totally got your girlfriend-who I, like, TOTALLY didn’t know about-to move in, that’s why! Silly!”, Feliks said.

‘Wow, he’s getting on my nerves and I haven’t even formally met him,’ I thought.

“But you said girls...did you think Abbigail would have friends over?”, Toris asked, speaking fairly slowly.

“Well, yeah,” Feliks said then looked over at me.

“Wanna go skirt shopping later, girl?”

Now, I try not to judge, and I hate it when people do. Respecting cultures is SO important to me. I mean, ever since I met Abhivadan Kaur, an Indian girl in my neighborhood, I learned that all cultures are different and need to be respected - no matter how strange the tradition seems. It’s normal for them and they don’t go by our norms.

“Why would you ask that to her?! You don’t even know her!”, Ivan choked out.

But this couldn’t be right. Mainly because Feliks was an average-size guy with longer, stark strait yellow-blond hair, pale-ish skin, and dark green eyes...that was wearing a pink shirt and flare jeans.

“Actually, Mr. Feliks, I had plans to study with her,” Lily said, gently tuging at my hand. I had a feeling that this was all the interaction I needed from Feliks, and that I would be seeing him often.

Lily and I were back upstairs. She was brushing and braiding my long auburn hair while we listened to what was going on downstairs. Eventually, everyone settled into a rhythm, and I could only guess that someone was cooking.

“Wonder who’s making dinner?”, Lily said.

“Well, I hope it’s not Natalya. It seems like she’d put arsenic in the borscht. And don’t you think it’s a tad early?”, I asked, since it’d be in between lunch and dinner if we were in America.

“Hahaha, but I don’t think she’d do that. I mean Natalya is obsessed about Ivan, but she’s not a psycho. And no, it’s not early to be making dinner. At what time do you eat in America?”, Lily replied.

“For my family, we eat between 5 and 6 or 6:30,” I said.

“Oh.”

“Yeah. I guess I’m gonna have to get used to this. Hey, I think Vash is calling us down,” I said. Lily put the rubberband in her hair then stood up. We walked downstairs talking about the weather forecast and if it’ll be okay to go out sight-seeing on Saturday.

As I began to finish up my meal, I looked around. What I saw at the table was this: Feliks (who had stayed for dinner) talking to poor Toris about dying a pony pink,
HISTORY a la STUPIDITY
by Katie

Well, I hope you enjoyed the history facts last time. Because I lost my ‘Stupid History’ (by Leland Gregory) book and I recalled all of that from memory. I know more, it’s just I either don’t remember the name(s) or date(s). So this is now collective. From me just being observant. So most of this won’t be history, just...I dunno...whatever? It really beats me what you’ll find here...

In ancient Greece they loved the human body. We know that. We see their junk on display all the time. But back then, it wasn’t just marble. They actually PAINTED the sculptors. Everything. From the pupils, to moles, to stuff I’d put here, but it isn’t C.A.. Unfortunately (or would it be fortunately?), the paint is long gone, leaving only a pure, white marble remaining. (From Stupid History by Leland Gregory)

Here’s a fun game to play: (B.T.W. I’m not responsible for any injuries or damage resulting from this game. Neither is ‘Music Choice’, the place I got this game from).

Hot Cockles

1) 1 person goes up to the front of the room. They are ‘it’.
2) ‘it’ closes their eyes.
3) 1 (I can’t stress this enough) only ONE person goes up to ‘it’.
4) They hit ‘it’. (I recommend on the leg or arm) and go back to where they were.
5) ‘it’ has to guess who hit them.
6) If ‘it’ guesses right, the person who hit ‘it’ becomes the new ‘it’.
7) If ‘it’ guesses wrong, they stay ‘it’

Remember Mama Greece? Well I betcha didn’t know this. Even though the Greeks revered the human body, if anyone showed up naked outside the Olympics (which were played in the nude, for those who didn’t know), they’d be arrested. (From Stupid History by Leland Gregory)

Sorry it’s so short. But I’ll work harder next time when it comes to being collective (and maybe I’ll find my book!).

I’m back! Did you like it? And do I see an Abbygail-Matthew-Ivan-Feliks love...square? Well, just to hurt you, I have to tell you this. Feliks is not involved. He’s just like that.

And I also have some questions that might’ve run through your mind. And the answers to them.

1.) Q: Where is this collage?
   A: On an island in an ocean. The closest place with people on it is the micro-nation Sealand. (So if you want reference to a place you know, it’s far off the coast of England.)

2.) Q: What’re the characters last names?
   A: That, I cannot tell you.

3.) Q: What inspired you to do this?
   A: Hetalia by Hidekaz Himaruya. Basically, I’m using his characters and giving him credit a quarter late. Oops. Don’t kill me. (But Abbygail, Michael, and Rosalinda Fernandez belong to me.)

4.) Q: What’s up with Feliks?
   A: Um...well, I don’t know too much about the whole skirts, ponies, pink thing; but...well...*smiles and decides to hide something from you* -- you’ll see.

5.) Q: What does Ivan’s’ sisters look like?
   A: Well, Natalya (B.T.W. I had a spelling mistake with her name in the first part) has long blonde hair and wears a blue dress apart from her uniform (they have school uniforms) and Katyusha has short beige hair like her brother. But I’m really gonna leave their appearance up to you.

a sleepy Hercules, Ivan was eyeing me (...wait what?), Lily and Vash eating like civilized people, Matthew scooting closer to me (then blushing when I noticed), and Alfred shoving food into his mouth like there was no tomorrow.

‘So...is this what it’s like to be a country in Europe?’ I thought. Picking up my plate and cleaning up my area, I went to go start the dishes. And while I was doing that, I planned to ask that Japanese guy in my class if he wants to study and kinda just hang out later. What’s-his-face seems pretty nice.
CAREER DAY

Career Day 2011 was another success at Rocky River Middle School for our eighth graders the day before Thanksgiving break. Our presenters this year included Mrs. Kathleen Boylan, the Health Commissioner of Lorain County; Anjanette Arabian-Witton, Attorney-at-Law; Kim Sanders, Nurse; Judges Fitsimmons and Hagan from Rocky River Municipal Court; Mayor Pam Bobst; college student, Jameson McGovern; Rocky River fireman, Kevin Bednarski; Designer, Dori Suchecki; Brown Aveda school; and Mr. Verhiley, law enforcement agent.

Before the day started, Heidi Glynnias Dance Studio started the day off with a demonstration and then had all the eighth graders up and dancing. Students learned about daily tasks, training and pay scales. A hands-on presentation by Brown-Aveda gave students a chance to style mannequins. The day was not only about career choices but also in learning about college. Tips were shared with the students regarding applying to colleges, studying and having a successful college experience. This was the 25th Annual Career Day at Rocky River Middle School.

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CHEESY JOKES . . . By Aleksandra & Olivia

- Did you hear about the guy who lost his whole left side?
  He’s alright now!

- What did one toilet say to the other toilet?
  You look flushed.

- What time is it when ten elephants are chasing after you?
  Ten after one!

- What’s smarter than a talking bird?
  A spelling bee!

- What did a pig use for his rash?
  Oinkment!

WORLD NEWS

By Katie

Ugh. I so don’t want to do this. I’m just not in the mood. But... you are students. And by law of my brain, students must be taught! So I shal teacheth ye all, ye shal learneth, an’ know for thine hath unintentionally come minself on behalf of knowledge.

Ukraine:
- Government: She’s a republic.
- Money: UAH (1 Ukrainian Hrynia = $8.04)
- Crime: 553,594
- Location: By her younger siblings, Russia and Belarus, above the Black Sea

Moldova:
- Government: This one’s also a republic.
- Money: MDL or the Moldovan Leu
- Crime: 36,302
- Location: Squeezed inside Ukraine

Sealand:
- Government: Monarchy (in WW2, when he declared himself a country, Larry (Super Larry) was king. Now it’s his son Michael (Super Michael).
- Money: Sealand Dollar
- Crime: 60 crimes in the past four years (and that’s a lot if you look at the size of him)
- Location: About 15 miles off the coast of the U.K. (He’ll show that England jerk! Germany and Sweden have recognized him as a country!)

There we go! And I thought it’d be nice to let all you critics (especially the kids in my grade who are groaning right now) that Sealand DOES exist. And that Ukraine and Moldova are in Europe. Well, that’s it for this quarter. See ya next time!
Movie Review

by Maire

BREAKING DAWN

What a great way to start off the first part of the last movie! Let me say there is a lot of drama, action, and romance. I would give it about an 8.9 out of 10.

The acting definitely got better as the movie progressed. Bella (Kristen Stewart), has definitely gotten better with expressing her emotions during the movie.

If you read the books (like me!), they did change some stuff, which I didn’t like. In my opinion, they should have kept everything the same. I think Part 2 will be better than all of them combined. In the end, great movie!

THE MISFITS
(by James Howe):
This book, although it’s written wonderfully and has some parts that are too adorable for words, has some unrealistic things going on. It is very realistic, but it just has some parts that aren’t (a 12-year-old tie salesman, I mean, really?). Don’t let this discourage your romre adingit,t hough! It’s wonderful, but it requires an open mind.

Summary: What do a 12-year-old student who moonlights as a tie salesman; a tall, outspoken girl; a gay middle schooler; and a kid branded as a hooligan have in common? Best friends for years, they’ve all been the target of cruel name-calling. But now that they’re in seventh grade, they’re not about to take it any more.

LIFE AS WE KNEW IT
(by Susan Pfeffer):
This is a very intriguing book! It is the first one out of a trilogy and a science fiction one (but don’t worry, if you don’t like science fiction, it’s not particularly heavy). This book is absolutely amazing, and it makes you think how life can be changed so quickly.

Summary: Miranda’s disbelief turns to fear in a split second when a meteor knocks the moon closer to the earth. How should her family prepare for the future when worldwide tsunamis wipe out the coasts, earthquakes rock the continents, and volcanic ash blocks out the sun?

Book Reviews

by Aleksandra

Hello! For this issue of the RRMS newspaper, I have more excellent books to discuss! This quarter, though, there will not be a theme like last quarter’s (which was Halloween), since Christmas is long over. However, I hope you enjoy these books!
Hey! :) Valentine’s Day is right around the corner. Here is a tasty recipe for cupcakes!

**Strawberry Hearts Cupcake Recipe**

**Ingredients**
*One box vanilla (or strawberry) cake mix - prepare as directed.
*Prepared whipped cream - see recipe below.
*One pint fresh strawberries sliced in half.

**Directions**
1~Bake cupcakes following the box directions.
2~Allow cupcakes to completely cool.
3~Top cupcakes with clouds of whipped cream.
4~Place a strawberry half on top of each little cake.
5~Refrigerate until ready to serve

**Whipped Cream Recipe**
1/2 cup heavy cream, well chilled
2 Tbs. confectioners’ sugar
1/4 tsp. vanilla extract

1. Combine the heavy cream, confectioners’ sugar, and vanilla extract in a mixing bowl.
2. With an electric mixer set on medium speed, begin beating the cream mixture, increasing the speed to high as cream thickens to avoid spatters.
4. Enjoy!
RRMS STUDENTS RAISED $10,397.34 CASH FOR HOOPS FOR HUNGER/CLEVELAND FOOD BANK!

Pie
by Jacquelyn

When you hear pie in school, you think in terms of the pi of 3.14 or the pie you eat, but not this time. I’m referring to teachers being PIED IN THE FACE! It was all part of raising money for Hoops for Hunger.

On December 2nd, for every dollar you brought in for Hoops for Hunger, you got a raffle ticket to a teacher of your choice to “pie in the face”. The pie throwing winners were:

Rachel pied Ms. Liberatore, Jolie and Aaron pied Ms. Hampel, Emily pied Mrs. Rowe, Claire pied Mrs. Clark, Maria pied Mr. Zerbey, Hannah pied Mrs. Harkin-Newsome and Lauren pied Mr. England. It was so much fun to watch, I hope this happens every year!!!
Thanks, too, to Student Council who contributed the proceeds from their Student Council Dance on 12/2/11 in the amount of $378.34 to the Cleveland Food Bank.

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not to mention the boxes and boxes and more boxes of food that was donated.

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Food & Funds Collection
Nov. 17 through Dec. 9, 2011
Bay Village and Rocky River Middle and High Schools
(Please make donation checks out to “Harvest for Hunger”)

Game
Dec. 9, 2011
River vs Bay
Boys’ JV - 6:00 PM
Boys’ Varsity - 7:30 PM
Basketball Games @ Bay High School
The Big Bone

By: Jacquelyn

Once upon a time in a little city called City of the Dogs, it was the only city in the world where it was legal to have dogs. There was a little family, the Gosselins, who didn’t have a dog, but they loved dogs. They were so jealous of their neighbors, the Duggers, who had a German shepherd named Max. They always went on and on about how cute he was.

The Gosselins had a 12-year-old daughter, Cara, and her dad was a dentist. His secretary's name was Rose, and she had a dog named Bailey. Bailey is a Maltese-Shih Tzu and he is the cutest dog in the world! They were going to have to put him down because Rose was moving and couldn’t take him with her. Cara begged and begged her parents for Bailey, but as always they said, “No.”

Then came Christmas morning and Cara heard a sound coming from the basement.

"Whoooooooo," she heard.
"Let me out!" the voice mumbled.
Cara was NOT going to go down there and see what the voice was, so she woke up her older brother, Joel.
"Joel, Joel, wake up! I hear something!"
"What." Joel said tiredly.
"I hear something -- wait, listen, do you hear it?"

Cara said.
"Yeah," said Joel “Let’s go wake up Mady.”
"Ok.”
So off they went to wake up their sister, Mady.
"I don’t hear anything. Get out of my room and go back to bed!” exclaimed Mady.
Cara tried to go to bed, but she just couldn’t. Finally, the rest of her family finally woke up.

And to their surprise, the first gift they opened was Bailey! They thought they knew everything about him, but they didn’t know he could talk! That’s what all the noise was, and now it all made sense.

Bailey got gifts, too, and it was the worlds biggest bone! The Duggers came right over to see Bailey and his new bone. And, of course, they brought Max. Max wanted the bone in the worst way and it was about to get ugly. They were about to start fighting.

“Stay away from my bone,” said Bailey.
“Bark,” said Max, confused.
Bailey yelled so loud the whole country came running.
“Get off my property!” yelled Bailey.
“Bark-Bark,” said Max.

This bantering between the dogs went on and on. People tried to go home and sleep but the dogs just got louder and louder. The fight continued for days, then weeks. The dogs finally came to an agreement and figured out they should just eat the bone. The Duggers and the Gosselins had a meeting about what they should do and came to the conclusion they should just get Max his own bone. So they did. It took them 72 hours to go get it, but they got it.

The Duggers took Max home and Max was content that he had his very own bone and Bailey had his.

A year and a half went by and Bailey’s bone is almost gone. Max’s bone was gone in a week.
All the families lived happily ever after.
Antivenin - Antivenin is a medication that stops venom from snakes, spiders, scorpions, etc. destroying your body. There is about 24 different types of snake antivenin. The first time it was known being used was in 1895. Antivenin is made by extracting venom from the snake and injecting it into a sheep or horse. Gradually over time the animal gets a greater dose and eventually the animal will have a high dose while giving off antibodies that fight off venom. Then the scientists extract the venom from the animal and separate the red blood cells from the white blood cells. The white blood cells are then bottled and shipped away to hospitals.

Venom - Viper venom destroys blood cells, cobras and krait venom mostly targets nerves which interact with the nerves, communication and can cause muscles to stop. The victims will usually suffocate or speed up the nerves making the muscles go through spasms. More than 90,000 people could die each year from snake bites. Some bites are potent enough to kill elephants. There are three different types of teeth that different venomous snakes use to deliver venom.

Large-fanged snakes, such as the timber rattle snake, the fangs fold back when the mouth is closed and swing into place when the mouth is open and ready to strike. The venom is pumped into the victim by putting pressure onto their glands.

Rear-fanged snakes rear fangs are small and far back in the mouth and have to get their mouth around the prey, but they do not have to pump the venom, it just flows through the fangs.

Front-fanged snakes, such as the African boomslang and the coral snake, have better positioned fangs to deliver venom than rear-fanged snakes. The fangs are also small but are well rounded to inject venom.

The most venomous snake in North America is the Western Diamondback rattlesnake. It can easily be disturbed and can inject enough venom at one time to kill 45 people. Vipers have a heart-shaped head that allows them to have venom glands that expand outward. The Gabon vipers have the longest fangs of any venomous snake. They are 2 inches long (51 millimeters) and are very sharp. The most venomous snake is the inland taipan. Snake venom has been used to cure snake bites, kill cancer cells, used as a pain reliever, and create new antivenin. The brighter the venom the more toxic it is.

Defense and Enemies - Humans are snakes greatest enemy. We have used their skins for clothing and bags. Also, many snakes have become endangered due to cane toads because when
They eat the toad, the venom kills the snake from the inside. Other snakes, such as the king snake, will feed on other snakes. The mongoose is another snake enemy. It mostly feeds on cobras trampling it then breaking its back. Mongoose are also immune to venom. Birds are another enemy, where they grip the snake with their rough feet and carry the snake away. Snakes have many defenses, though. Some snakes, such as the hognose, will play dead. Spitting cobras will spit venom into the eyes that could make them permanently blind. Other snakes will puff themselves up to look bigger. Snakes will even show fangs and rattlesnakes will rattle their tail. But almost always, snakes will hiss and run. Only some snakes will try to bite.

Facts - The longest snake ever recorded was the reticulated python at 32 feet 9 1/2 inches. It is the fastest growing species of snake in the world. Small snakes usually eat rodents such as mice. Larger specimens eat pigs and primates. Wild ones, near humans, will eat chickens, stray dogs and cats. They are ambush predators. It lives in the eastern hemisphere in swampy areas. Sometimes some snakes are born with two heads. They will sometimes nip each other over food. The fastest land snake is the puff adder. It is a venomous snake found in Africa. It feeds on mammals, birds, amphibians, and lizards. The fastest sea snake is the Yellow bellied sea snake. It is a venomous snake and swims in warm seas. All snakes are carnivorous. One snake survived two whole years without a meal. Snakes have lose jaws that allow them to swallow prey larger than their heads. An African rock python weighing 140 pounds once swallowed an animal weighing 130 pounds -- that is almost the same weight!

Senses - Most snakes have poor eyesight but snakes can see in heat signatures to depict warm blooded animals. They have an acute sense of smell. To smell, they flick out their tongue to catch smell particles on their tongue and pull it back inside their mouth and flick against their Jacobson organ. A snake has a forked tongue to depict were the smell is strongest.

Defeating Prey, Hunting, and Prey Type - Snakes have many different ways of catching prey. For egg, slug, and snail-eating snakes, catching prey is not an issue; but for other prey, snakes will have to find substantial ways of killing prey.

Constriction: Boas and pythons, such as the Green anaconda, will constrict their prey by latching their teeth around the prey and then wrap themselves around the prey and squeeze tight and swallow it whole.

Venom: Vipers and cobras, such as the diamondback rattlesnake, will poison prey by biting onto prey and injecting venom from their fangs. Vipers, such as the gaboon viper, have triangular looking shaped heads from above, thanks to large venom sacs on the side of their heads.

Types of hunting methods: Active diurnal hunters. They use their eyesight to locate prey then follow it and get up as close as possible then strike with a quick rush. They have longitudinal stripes and large eyes such as the Namib sand snake.

Foragers: Foragers will usually eat slow moving prey such as molluscs and invertebrates and non-moving prey (eggs). Such as the American Lyre Snakes.

Sit and wait predators: They are characterized by having heavy bodies and large heads. Despite poor smell, they have good camouflage
and color disruption. These snakes include many boas, pythons, and vipers.

**Luring:** There are a number of sit and wait predators, such as the pope's pit viper. These snakes will use their tails to lure the prey by moving it around while their heads and bodies are camouflaged.

**Local Species:** There are about 28 snakes in Ohio. One of these include the venomous copperhead. The most local snake in Ohio is the Lake Erie water snake. The water snake helps the economy by feeding on the invasive water guppy that feeds on other fishes eggs.

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**DESTINATION IMAGINATION . . .**

*By Dante*

Destination Imagination is a great program. It is kind of like the Science Olympiad, and there is a big tournament in March where all the teams in the area compete. I joined it the first year that it was available in Rocky River and this is my third year. I think it's fun! There are D.I. groups all over America and even worldwide. In the tournament, teams that win can go on to higher competitions.

D.I. teams get together in the Fall and start working on a creative solution to a D.I. challenge that the teams choose. The challenges to pick from are about art, building, improvisation, theater, technology, engineering, etc. It is hard work, but the meetings are fun and we build a lot of stuff. In D.I., you are supposed to be as creative as possible and think of new ways to do things. The D.I. people say, “If it doesn't say you can't, then you can.”

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**More About Destination Imagination . . .** *by Alec*

Destination Imagination, or D.I., is an after-school activity that puts your thinking skills to the test. What you must do in D.I. is pick a challenge. After you, and hopefully some friends, pick a challenge, you are placed on teams. It takes a few months to actually understand the challenge and come up with a solution. Your team will also most likely do instant challenges at your meetings. On the challenge day, you go to a school and wait until it is your team's turn to compete. You usually spend all day at the school because after you compete and everyone has picked a raffle ticket — there is a raffle with cool things — there is the awards ceremony. The team that ranks 1st place goes on to the states. If they place there, they go on to nationals, then I believe there is an international (but I am not completely sure). D.I. is a truly amazing extra-curricular activity!
This Newspaper Was Made Possible By:

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Matthew

WRITERS:
Jacquelyn, Paityn, Paul, Aleksandra, Olivia, Joseph, Teagan, Alek, Joliet, Anna, Shuchi, Nick, Gabe, Becka, Katie, Anthony, Siwei, Christopher, Katie, Maire, Maddie, William & Dante

ARTISTS:
Yara, Amanda & Diana

ADVISOR: Mrs. Owens