



**BCGT Board
2009-2010**

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President's Corner

As this year comes to a close, Pooja and I wish to thank everyone for their cooperation and support while we have served on BCGT's board. It has been a pleasure getting to know such thoughtful parents, teachers, and administrators. Our district provides an uncommonly comprehensive program for our extended students and it's nice to see them grow and thrive as a result.

This year BCGT has hosted many fine programs for students and their families. A popular group was the kids' book club, which met three times with fifth grade self-contained teacher Georgia Nelson. Mrs. Nelson keeps up with all the latest in young adult fiction and managed to choose books that provoked fervent discussion among our 4-6 graders (this adult enjoyed reading along, too, but had to settle for eating a cookie on the sidelines). You may view the titles on BCGT's online calendar if your child is looking for some fun literary selections.

Meanwhile, the adults discussed some interesting non-fiction works about the latest studies in psychology and brain research and what they mean to families raising children. Due to some fascinating new findings, we found ourselves re-examining nature vs. nurture when it comes to gifted children. Our thanks to Pair Chocolates (unfortunately now closed) and Barrington Chocolate Shoppe for their hospitality during our book discussions.

Other terrific programs this year included an overview of gifted education in District 220 as explained by Julie Luck Jensen and Tim Martin, an evening with author and

educator Janet Gore, our Family Game Night, a coffee with district 220 gifted teachers sharing fresh wisdom from the National Association for Gifted Children conference, our hands-on Family Science Night, a discussion of what Escher's art and Bach's music have in common by Professor Richard Wilders, and a debate night for kids. We strive to provide programs that both enlighten and provide social opportunities for our members. Please continue to provide feedback and suggestions as we plan our calendar for the upcoming year.

We are pleased to welcome the following new and continuing board members for the 2010-2011 school year:

- President: Katherine Logue
- Secretary: Kathleen Uhran
- Treasurer / Membership: Keri Bowman
- Programs: June Cramer
- Publicity: Sonali Majmudar and Amanda Van Marwijk Kooy
- Newsletter: Kathleen Battle
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We have enjoyed working with you and hope we have enhanced your family's educational experience in some way.

Pooja Chatterji & Mindy Vlk
BCGT Co-Presidents

Ask Julie!

Julie Luck Jensen

Director of
Extended Services
Barrington CUSD 220



Dear Julie,

I am at my wit's end with my 11-year-old daughter, Emma, or, as I now call her, my tiny teen! When did 11 year olds become adolescents? Emma is very gifted, but she frequently seems to be overwhelmed with her life. She shows passion for a variety of topics such as science, animals, and music, but she appears to change her focus from week to week. She is an extremely talented pianist, and I was hoping she would now concentrate on her music and several upcoming competitions.

When some well-meaning adult casually asks what she wants to do when she grows up, Emma seems in agony and almost breaks into tears. Her emotions also swing with every social issue involving friends and family. Last week she had a meltdown over global warming. Emma takes everything personally! Some days she wants to share every minute detail of her life with me and other days she won't even answer simple questions.

Has a teen alien taken over my daughter's body?

Anxious over Early Adolescence

Dear Anxious,

You are right in describing Emma's behaviors as adolescent-like. Many psychologists who have written about gifted children (Kazimierz Dabrowski, Maureen Niehart and others) note that these children exhibit signs of adolescence at ages earlier than their peers. They may be showing signs of abstract reasoning before their peers or may exhibit a different level of moral and ethical development. Emma could be going through a period of great asynchrony in which she is experiencing different levels of cognitive, physical, social, and emotional functioning.

Adolescence in gifted children can be a highly intensified version of what other teens are experiencing. Gifted adolescents often experience acute reasoning abilities, profound emotional responses and strong imagination. Combine this with hormonal changes and you have an existence that could feel almost unbearable!

The following suggestions for parents and teachers in dealing with the unique needs of gifted teens (or preteens!) come from ideas shared in a chapter written by Susan Jackson and Vicky Frankfourth Moyle in the book *Living with Intensity*:

1. Provide opportunities for the child to work not only with age peers, but also with people of all ages. This allows the child to find others who share their interests and mature passion for a subject. For example, is there a local group working on service projects related to prevention of the effects of global warming?
 2. Balance the pressures to conform. Emma may feel she needs to look, feel and think like the others her age, yet that is not natural for her. Make sure you are accepting of her unique expression of her individuality. Don't push her to be "more like the other girls".
 3. When a child's talent is emphasized, her focus on performance and competition can overshadow her development in other areas. It could also either exacerbate her self-importance or even produce feelings of inadequacy or depression.
 4. Be careful not to become too over-involved in Emma's activities. In our attempts to show interest in our children's activities we must still leave space for them to
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Ask Julie!

Continued ...

become deeply engaged with others and the world through their own developing lens.

5. Make sure Emma has an environment in which she can be her “true self”. If it has not been available to her in the past, advocate for school opportunities for Emma to be with other high ability students in academics and extra-curricular activities.
6. If you are like most of us, you work hard to provide the ideal circumstances for your daughter to succeed in all things. Be sure to allow her to go through the struggles, trials, and challenges so necessary to her development.

No, Anxious, aliens have not taken over your daughter, but adolescence has! The next few years will be challenging not only for her, but for you as well. I second Maureen Niehart’s tips for parents of gifted adolescents: “Teach them. Support them. Encourage them. Be their inspiration.” I’d also add to be sure to schedule touch-ups for your new grey hair.

I can assure you that seeing your daughter develop into a mature, happy, healthy, accomplished adult will make all your efforts worthwhile!

Julie

BCGT Family Science Night

Susan Lenz, a teacher and science enthusiast, challenged students to use their creative thinking and problem solving skills to complete different science “challenges” using everyday materials. For the first challenge, students and their parents were asked to build a tower out of spaghetti and marshmallows. The activity was open ended and allowed for students’ higher order thinking and problem solving skills. Many students worked together and planned their structures, negotiating and redesigning along the way. It was fantastic to see all the creativity and cooperative learning! The winning spaghetti and marshmallow tower was over 32 inches tall and supported a tennis ball. Wow! Another “challenge” was to create a balloon-powered car with straws, a box, cups and a balloon. It was amazing to see the number of different designs that were developed and actually worked. Through development of their products, students had the opportunity to use the real-life



BCGT Happenings



BCGT Happenings

Continued ...

processes of testing, redevelopment and prototyping that scientists use in everyday life.

They did this all while having lots of fun!



BCGT Parent Book Club Notes

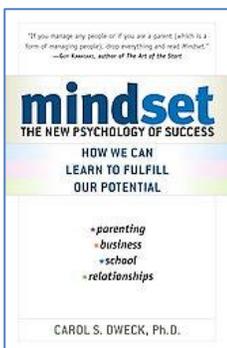
By Pooja Chatterji

This month's book club choice was quite a treat. Carol Dweck's work is widely respected in the educational field. The premise of her book is that people in any field (academics, sports, and business) can be successful despite the lack of "natural ability". According to Dweck, the proper "mindset" is required along with ability and talent, to be successful. She describes every person as having a particular "mindset". An individual may have a "fixed mindset", a "growth mindset", or a combination of both at any point in time.

If someone is of the "fixed mindset", he/she will probably define their identity with success and hesitate to take up new challenges that might expose their deficiencies. Typically, these individuals believe that they need to constantly validate their ability and fear the process of learning, especially if it exposes them to possible failure. They are the natural born athlete, who might give up a sport because they lost a game, or the "smart" kid who thinks that if he has to study hard, he is probably not that smart. An interesting chapter on CEOs of various American Companies describes how some CEOs like to surround themselves with "yes-men" who validate their decisions rather than confronting their shortcomings. This can lead them to choose short-term planning, which makes them look good immediately, instead of long-term which would be more strategic for the company.

"Growth mindset" people, on the other hand, enjoy and learn from new challenges and experiences. In the short-term, they might look like they have failed miserably, but in the long run; they have used hard work and practice to their advantage and achieved great success. They thrive on stretching themselves to meet difficult challenges rather than losing interest when they encounter difficulties. Dweck writes about how some of our best athletes didn't start out being great, but had to practice long and hard to get to their performance level.

Anyone can train himself or herself to switch from a "fixed mindset" to a "growth



BCGT Happenings

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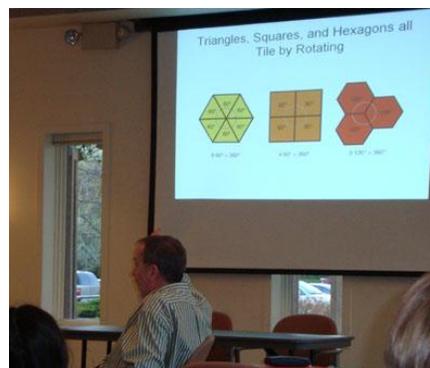
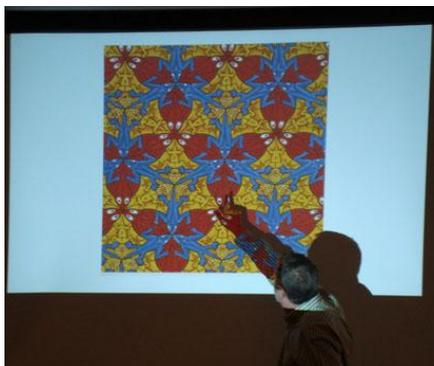
mindset". The author gives ideas and exercises for parents and ways for them to help their children develop a "growth mindset". She uses various examples like Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods, Lee Iacocca and others to illustrate both types of mindset. Of course, "success" depends on how each one of us defines it and all the examples in the book may not hold at the current time.

Some of us were concerned about the "sensationalist" nature of some of the points in the book. For example, she argues that there is no such thing as a "natural born" athlete. It would have been a little more comprehensive to include a discussion on "motivation" and "passion" and how the environment might affect different outcomes.

This is an enjoyable read and a book that is a forerunner to some of the ideas regarding talent and hard work presented by Malcolm Gladwell and other authors.

BCGT Presents- Patterns in Music and Art

On April 14, Richard Wilders, Professor of Mathematics at North Central College, presented a talk about patterns in music and art. M.C. Escher was an artist known for the tessellations that use mathematics to create fascinating works of art. Johann Sebastian Bach used this same mathematics to create his canons and fugues. Professor Wilder showed lots of Escher's work and we listened to some of Bach's wonderful canons as he related these two artists' works.



We also had a chance to create some of our own artwork with tessellations at the end of the presentation.

Professor Wilders will be teaching a math camp for gifted math students this summer. More information can be found at www.northcentralcollege.edu/x4843.xml.

We have had many different events this year - from Kids and Parents Book Clubs to Game Night, Science Night and Debate Night.

If you have comments about these events or ideas for new events, we would like to hear from you.

Please email your suggestions to bcgt@bcgt.org!

BCGT Happenings

Continued ...

BCGT Debate Night

We had our first Debate Night for fourth through eighth graders on Friday 30th. Mary Jo Kunzmann ran the event and we had some parent volunteers to help moderate. Students from Hough, Lines, Grove, Roslyn, Station and Grove came prepared with facts about the following two topics - "Should professional athletes be role models?" and "Should our government force its citizens to use hybrid or fuel-efficient cars?". The students had a very lively debate discussing the pros and cons of these questions, while enjoying cookies and milk provided by BCGT. It was a fun event.

Classroom News



NAGC Conference - The "ClockWise System"

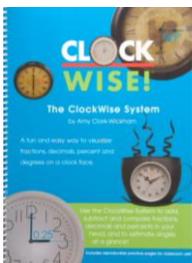
By Patti Haney (Extended Resource teacher, Hough Street School)

It was such a thrill for me to have the opportunity to attend the NAGC Gifted Children Conference in St. Louis. It was a luxury to have the time to spend listening to others who are passionate about meeting the needs of gifted learners, and energizing to learn from them. While I thoroughly enjoyed the sessions I attended at the conference, I would actually like to share some information with you about a game Julie purchased for us after time spent meeting its author!

The "ClockWise System," by Amy Clark-Wickham, is a fun and easy way to visualize fractions, decimals, percent, and degrees on a clock face. The set comes with a book, 2 big yellow foam dice with red dots on them, multiple decks of specialty cards, 2 large clock faces, and a "clockulator" poster. This program teaches students to add, subtract and compare fractions, decimals, and percents in their head, and to estimate angles at a glance. It is a comprehensive, connected way at looking at numbers and how they are related.

In order to play the game, two teams each throw two foam dice until they get a prime number. Once they've gotten that far, they run to their table, pick a card ($1/2$, for example), which they must align next to the correct hour on the clock face (6:00 in this case). They must tag the next player and then run to the end of the line. While they aren't allowed to coach one another during their turn, they are allowed to move an incorrectly placed card before they pick their own card if they've spotted an error that a teammate has made. Ultimately, there is a fraction, decimal, percent, and degree card aligned next to each half hour of the clock, coming out like octopus legs. When a team has placed all of its cards, they gather together to check their board and correct any errors. Once they have finished, the other team checks the board as well. If it is correct, the first team wins. If not, the other team wins! Believe me, it is an action packed game, and the kids love it!

I wondered whether or not learning the ClockWise system would change the way my students look at and solve problems involving fractions, decimals, and percents. Would the knowledge they've gained transfer to problems when we weren't working with the clock? Yes! I was reviewing fraction concepts with my fifth grade students this week, and when asked how they had solved a problem requiring equivalent fractions, one of my students explained how he applied what he had learned during "clock" math. The others in the class agreed that he had used a good strategy, and went on to use it themselves in the problems that followed.



Classroom News

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I am in the process of planning a student/parent "ClockWise" competition to be held here at school, and I am quite confident that my students will beat their parents with no trouble at all!

Thanks again for supporting our continuing education. I thoroughly enjoy learning all that I can about gifted learners and then applying those things in my classroom!

Elmhurst College Tour

By Lori Ford (Extended Resource teacher, Sunny Hill School)

On Thursday, March 18, past and present students from the Extended Program at Sunny Hill Elementary journeyed to Elmhurst College. Delving into the world of higher education, the fifth through eighth grade students were able to observe a college class, tour the campus, engage in dialogue with current college students, meet with an

admissions counselor, and dine in the student cafeteria.



Learning about college has continued for these students back at district 220 as they are led through follow-up experiences including discussions regarding career interests, college preparatory curriculum in high school, and goal setting.

Collectively, this has been an enlightening experience for all as students discover the independence and possibility that college provides.

Lines celebrate 40 years

By Sarah Giunchedi (Extended Resource teacher, Lines School)

Many of you may already know that Lines is celebrating its' 40th anniversary this school year! All year events have been planned, with a culmination being an Open House for the community on April 29.

At Lines this year, we have been bringing back many old traditions. We have also been looking at how life has changed in the past 40 years. The 5th grade extended reading class has looked at some of the important technological advances that have taken place in the past 40 years: smoke detectors (1969), cell phones, DNA fingerprinting, Human Genome Project, digital music, ATM machines, MRIs, MP3 players and GPS. Working in small groups, we conducted research on these. We shared our information, as well as the impact they have had on people and the various viewpoints related to them. Our research posters will be shared in the gym during the community Open House.

This was a fun project, and we all really enjoyed working together on it!

Classroom News

Continued ...

Easy as Pi

By Nika Steffen, 5th Grade - Barbara Rose School

Do you think things are easy as pie? Well you're wrong! Unless you are a total math genius (or very good at memorizing), pi is very hard to memorize. Pi, $22/7$, or 3.1415926..., is an irrational number. It neither repeats, nor does it end. It also helps you find the area of a circle and makes a delicious desert.

Recently, at Barbara Rose School, Mr. Ron Metcalf's students continued their tradition of celebrating March 14 as Pi Day (3.14), or as close as they can get to that day. On Pi Day, everyone gathered in Mr. Metcalf's room to enjoy a lunch of pizza, drinks, and pie provided by our great helper-moms. While eating, students saw their classmates get



invited up to recite as many digits of pi that they had memorized. For every digit a student memorized, he or she received a jellybean, so kids were memorizing in their sleep to win this competition.

Speaking about winning, there was only one winner in each grade. In 3rd place, a fifth grader named Jaiman Shah memorized 140 digits of pi. In 2nd place, a fourth grader named Kartik Sarangmath memorized 356 digits of pi. In 1st place came a third grader named Nicholas Edels (pictured to the left) who memorized 604 digits of

pi! I would also like to mention Rishi Narayanan, a third grader, who memorized over 400 digits of pi. Overall, everyone worked hard and did a great job.

Pi Day is a fantastic event at Barbara Rose School. Mr. Metcalf's students enjoy it more and more each year. And who knows, maybe next year you will celebrate it, too.

Pi Day

By Stephen Levy, 5th Grade - North Barrington School



On March 14, it was Pi Day for the third, fourth, and fifth grade extended math classes at North Barrington School. We had already been learning about pi before Pi Day, but we have never done anything like this. We had tons of fun while we all learned a lot of new things about pi.

There were many events during Pi Day, some learning about pi and some just for fun. The main event was a pi memorizing game. Whoever memorized the most digits of pi won. There was a first, second, and third place winner. The winners received medals or a trophy. All first, second, and third place winners memorized over two hundred digits. Believe it or not, there was a tie for first place. There was a one number difference between second and third place. There were more events including a hula hoop contest. The winner was the one who could hula hoop the longest while reciting digits of pi. If you couldn't think of any more numbers, you had to try to hula hoop for five minutes. There was also crafts like making birthday cards for Albert Einstein. There were many other events like monpily which is just like monopoly, but every time you roll you have to answer a question about pi.

After we were all done with the events, we had pizza pi for lunch. We then all had pie for dessert. We got to choose from apple pie, chocolate moose pie and the most delicious pi shaped frosted cookies.

Classroom News

Continued ...

The Pi Day festivities ended in the middle of the day right before recess. We all had a great day learning about and filling our tummies with pie. It was a great event and we all look forward to doing it again next year!

Egypt Day - How ancient civilizations have influenced us

By Abby Aleksick, 6E - BMS Station

Modern life has many benefits, from cell phones to email to ordering things online. But it all started in ancient civilization, and we would never have come this far if it weren't for our predecessors, who paved the road for us to walk on. The old ways are practiced even in modern times; they are practiced everywhere, from Cairo to Station Middle School, in the small town of Barrington, Illinois.

Egypt Day, December 16th, 2009. The school is buzzing with chatter. People are wearing everything from long robes to stuffed pharaohs' crowns to ace bandages(to look like mummies). The sixth grade crowded into the media center, pushing and shoving, to learn more about what we would be doing today, and remembering being the test subjects of yesterday's trial run of their own team's activity- for the 6E-team, it was math in Mrs. Schumacher and Ms. Hunter's room. The math was challenging to write but it was amazing to see how innovative the Egyptians had been with small things like counting and writing and putting them into huge projects like building the pyramids.

The day kicked off with a slide about a man named Emile searching for ancient pharaohs' tombs in the dry Egyptian desert. Then we divided into our teams and filed out of the media center to various destinations throughout the school. After gym, the 6E-team left for Mr. Chall's room for an interesting board game about the death of the famous boy pharaoh, Tutankhamen. Each group in the room came up with a wacky theory as to his demise. I could tell from the many facts that the Egyptian culture is ancient and complex, and just when we think we know everything about it, we make a discovery that plunges us back into the dark in terms of questions to be answered. However, scientific methods were developed and tested for the sake of finding out more about Egyptian mummies and artifacts, and this has influenced our culture in a whole different way than the plain facts.

After the board game, the 6E-team went to lunch and enjoyed watching a teacher from every team get wrapped in toilet paper and costumed students from the crowd win the raffle for target gift cards. It was fun to see how different students had chosen different aspects of Egyptian life to imitate; some were pharaohs and queens, other were commoners and slaves with simpler garb. The is much like the social classes today, with the upper class being able to afford more clothes and jewelry.

After the entertaining lunch, the students of the 6E-team went to Mr. Berger's room for playacting. The entire team participated in a skit that made fun of the names and ways of ancient Egypt. It was funny, and more importantly I learned how ancient Egypt had been associated with other regions and countries, rather than being isolated. Even though I knew most of it was fake, the spoofs had some basis to them and I could tell some of what had actually happened. I also learned that people have become very devoted to archaeology because of the immense discoveries to be made about Egyptians and their culture.

After this, we went to Ms. Padal's room to make pyramids. Inside, we sketched things we'd want to have with us in the afterlife, and we covered the outside in bricks. I



Classroom News

Continued ...

learned just how much the proper arrangement of the burial chamber and tomb mattered, and just how much stuff the pharaohs would have buried with them. Judging by what most of us wanted in our tombs, it was a whole lot.

Finally, the 6E-team kids shuffled into C-7 and C-8 to make Egyptian collars. We were instructed to cut out paper collars with holes in the middle and slits on the end to slide onto our necks. We colored them in according to patterns, and I realized how Egypt had probably influenced modern jewelry and art.

Knowing this, I found that the day had been a complete success. We had learned, through fun and exciting activities, about an early culture that influenced the future. Struggles we know today are made easier by discoveries from long ago. We have to thank the Egyptians for the ease of modern life with all of its technology and comforts. To put it simply, Egypt changed the world.

Opa! 6-E Greekfest!

By Emily Tokarski, 6E - BMS Prairie

Greekfest was a large get-together for the 6-E teams of Barrington Middle Schools and was a smashing success this year! At Prairie, the festivities started off in P.E class, with Olympic-themed activities such as chariot racing, javelin, running long jump, and discus throwing competitions. Obviously, we couldn't use the same tools as Olympians did, but we got pretty close. For chariot racing, every student needed a partner. One person was a horse, the other a chariot driver, and the horse was "harnessed" with a jump rope to link the people together. As for the javelin throwing, we used pool noodles and threw them as far as we possibly could, and for the running long jump, a tape measure was set out; we sprinted up and then jumped as far as we were able to go. In place of a discus, we used a frisbee and threw it down the hallway, once almost hitting a teacher in the head!



Later that afternoon, the fun continued. The whole Prairie 6-E team dressed up in togas and welcomed our friends from Station, and then both teams performed skits. Play topics included a story about a greedy man, a toga fashion show (with men in sandals and 'murses'...), a crazy Delphi oracle, a court case about a divorce, and another "lesser known" epic poem of Homer, The Idiodyssey. After the presentations, we headed down to the commons for 'A Taste of Greece', where we ate delicious gyros, baklava, pasticchio (Greek 'lasagna'), pita bread and salad. Then it was time for Greek dancing. The dances were simple, but fast, which was very difficult for the uncoordinated! A series of stepping and kicking proved to be challenging for all of us. It was a fantastic, fun-filled day for both 6-E teams!

Classroom News

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Chicago Shakespeare Theater- Comedy of Errors

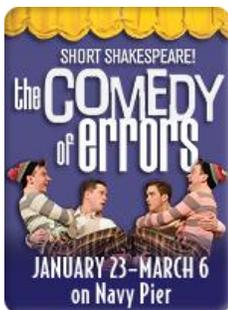
By Natalie Schaffer, 5th grade - Hough Street School

The Comedy of Errors is a fabulous play that I enjoyed watching from the comfort of my seat on the third floor balcony of the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre on Thursday, February 25, 2010. In my opinion, there is really no other play in the comedy genre that comes close to providing such an entertaining experience because of the amazing performances of the actors, the interesting scenery, out of the ordinary costumes, and funny surprises. Mrs. Haney's reading class shared the experience of a lifetime by watching this production performed by the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre company and directed by David H. Bell. While some of the characters, dialogue, costumes, and props were unexpected, I found this director's ideas about how to make a 400 year old play come to life for a young audience made it easier to understand, funnier, and more exaggerated compared to just reading the script.

To begin with, several of the characters acted differently than I thought they would after reading the script of the play previously. The first character that was really different was Luce. In the script, there were no dramatic lines, of "Dromio, Dromio!" being called out by Luce. I thought of her as just a household person that would help you with cleaning and comfort you, like Luciana. The character of Luce was much funnier during the production than in the script. Some of the minor characters that I thought were different from the script were Angelo and Aegeon. Angelo was a lot merrier than I expected him to be. I thought he would be a bit more serious, but instead he had an accent like Mario from all of my DS games. I thought it was interesting that you could tell the Dromios apart by the way the ways the actors moved. Dromio of Ephesus had dramatically bigger movements than the Dromio of Syracuse. One of the ways that you could tell both sets of twins apart were the ways they acted, not just the clothes they were wearing. I do think Antipholus of Ephesus acted a bit angrier than how I imagined him in the script we read in class. I'm not sure if it was just the makeup but his face was completely red. While some of the characters appeared different than I expected, I don't think anyone overacted. Overall, the actors seemed to play their characters well.

Similarly, several of the characters actually looked different than I anticipated. For instance, Antipholus of Ephesus and Antipholus of Syracuse looked very different than I thought they would. I imagined that the clothes they were going to wear would look more like clothing I have seen in pictures from the 1500's or 1600's. Also, I thought their hair would be an inch or two lower than the bottom of their ears, rather than regular day hair. I thought the actors would wear wigs that looked more like the time of Shakespeare. As a result of their clothing and hairstyles, these characters appeared different than I expected.

Many of the actors used their body movements and voices to depict their characters quite clearly. For example, the two Dromios really used their body movements to convey enthusiasm as they clowned around. Also, the Bumbellinis only spoke a few times throughout the play, so they relied on their gymnastic movements to portray their characters. Adriana used her body to flirt with Antipholus of Syracuse as well. All in all, dramatic body movements really made a difference in how I interpreted the play. One of the actors, Daniel Cantor, played four different characters and he made them each unique by changing his voice. For Aegeon, he used a normal talking voice, but for Luce he used a little higher pitched voice to sound like a girl. When he played the doctor, the way he used his voice was convincing. And in the prologue, he was the director of a travelling play company and he used a normal voice, because he was acting like someone who organized



Classroom News

Continued ...

play productions.

The costumes in the play were different than I thought they would look like. Instead of clothing you would see in the 1500's or 1600's, it was a mix from all eras after that point. For instance, the Bumbellinis costumes didn't seem to fit with the time period of the play. I doubt in Shakespeare's time that you would see people walking around in suspenders, with a no sleeve shirt, and a black vest. For the two sets of twins, I found the costumes to be helpful because the Antipholous of Syracuse had a pink long sleeved shirt and his Dromio had a grey striped shirt with pink in between the stripes so you could tell they were both from Syracuse. And for the other Antipholous, he just wore a regular white long sleeved shirt and the Dromio had white in between the grey stripes. I didn't really suspect that Angelo would have a gnome-like hat and would just wear a regular shirt that you would see today. His shirt had little repeating stripes of white, green, and black that did not remind me of Shakespeare's time.

The lighting, makeup, scenery, set design, and special effects added interesting touches to the production. The lighting was really good because when they were on the boat in the first scene at the beginning of the play, they had blue lighting on the floor, so it wasn't completely dark and you could still see. And even in dark parts of the play they still had lights on. Next, the make-up was fairly good on most of the characters. They didn't wear intense stage make-up, but were just made up to look like regular people, although, on Antipholus of Ephesus the red blush was a little too extreme. Or was that not makeup... but true fury? The scenery was minimal but that part was true to theater during Shakespeare's time. If there was a cardboard tree on Shakespeare's stage, it would mean that the characters were in a vast forest of thousands of trees. To make it look like they were inside of a room, they had many carpets spread overlapping over a circular stage. The set design was excellent. It made you feel like you were there in the time period, because they had non-fancy chairs and regular tables. They also used a ladder with a few other pieces of wood on it for a door. And the funny part about that is that a man came and said, "you should try to break down the door if you really want to go in", and from behind his back he pulled out a little target and stuck it in the middle of the door. Later, they started pounding on it and tried to break it down. I also liked the big green treasure chest, because someone was sitting inside of it, but hidden from our view in the beginning as Aegeon was telling a story. The person sitting inside revealed a boat and a few other objects. So while Aegeon was telling the story, the person inside had the boat and when Aegeon said, "Our ship then encountered a mighty rock!", the person inside heard and one or two seconds later, he yelled "ROCK" really loud and held up a big Styrofoam rock next to a little boat. And then Aegeon said "it split our ship in two" and the person took the rock and the ship and smashed them together and said "ahhhhhh!" That was part of the production's very high tech special effects. Another amazing effect was when the characters brought a sheet out, and while Aegeon was telling the story, they simulated an ocean wave with a sheet. It was kind of like little kids playing with a parachute, shaking the handles at different speeds and making waves in the expansive fabric. Such a jump into the future, don't you think? Also, at the end of the play, the moon they had was above the two Dromios while they conversed. It was like scenery from Shakespeare's time, since it simulated that they were outside under a full moon.

Also, the use of space was simply outstanding. When Luce came running by, yelling "Dromio! Dromio!", one thing that Dromio and Antipholus did was to climb over the seats

Classroom News

Continued ...

in the audience and sit there while the actor called Luce ran by. Then they climbed back on the stage. Another excellent use of space was when Luce was running by and two Bumbellinis took down a climbing ropes and Antipholus and Dromio started climbing up while Luce ran by again. A few seconds later, she was up on the second balcony yelling...you know the rest. When she saw Dromio, he scurried back down the rope. I also thought this play group had excellent audience contact, whether it was shaking hands, climbing into the audience's seats to hide from a character running by, or just tossing things up from the main floor to the balcony.

No matter how old or young you are, this production of *The Comedy of Errors* is fun for all. Everyone who was a part of this play looked like they put in 150% of all that they had. With amazing characters, hard to miss scenes, and a fabulous job of using the space in the theater, this is by far the best live comedy I have ever seen.

Extended Art Program

By Janani Sivakumar, 6E - BMS Station Campus

A ribbon of light filters through the blinds onto the long tables in the center of the room. The air is heavy with the smell of fresh-baked clay just out of the kiln—a sweet aroma rewarding weeks of purposeful but satisfying creation. The clay pieces are the handiwork of students in the Barrington Middle School Extended Art Program, as are the BMS Station and Prairie United Way horses.

Are you artistically inclined, interested in expanding your horizon, enhancing your creativity, and unleashing the artist in you? If so, the extended art programs in the Barrington Middle Schools are just the place for you.

Each year, about 60 sixth graders get an opportunity to participate in Extended Art—30 in each middle school. Some of us fancy charcoal to pencil, or colored pencil to watercolor. Some enjoy cartooning, and others favor realistic drawing. But several of us wouldn't choose either—the preference is entirely some other style. Despite those differences, we are encouraged to add to our toolbox of art skills—to try our hands at a wide range of media and styles.

Wednesdays are my favorite school days because we have extended art—we have it only once a week in 6th grade, but in 7th and 8th, we get to enjoy two. It is the perfect counterpoint to many periods of math, science and social studies, and takes place during



the advisory period.

As part of this exciting opportunity at Station Middle School, I have met many peers who share my interests in art. This year, we have worked together on tessellations, decorative clay boxes, and multi-style drawings and enjoyed every minute.

Many thanks to our teachers for filling our palettes with colorful ideas!

As I See It



Ms. Valerie Pientka

**Extended Art teacher
Station Middle School**

How long have you been teaching art in this school district?

I have been teaching for about 30 years. I taught for 10 years at the elementary level in most of the schools in district 220. In the early 1980's I was involved at the ground level in creating the extended art program in our schools. Until the mid 1990's we had an extended art program at the elementary schools as well. That program was cut for various reasons. Creating art is one of the primary means of expression for some of our students and I am glad that our school district is one of a handful that still has an extended art program. I have been teaching at the middle school level for the past 20 years. Currently, I teach 6th grade regular Art and extended Art at Station Middle School.

How many students are in the middle school extended art program and how do they join?

We have about 30 students in extended art at each grade level at Station and the same number at Prairie middle school. Teachers at the elementary schools screen the students based on a portfolio that the student submits to the teacher. The portfolio may contain work created by the student in or out of class. We are looking for creativity, mastery of a skill set as well as flexibility in thinking. Although there are many exceptions, we have noticed a huge correlation between kids gifted in art and academics. Often these kids are very creative and have a lot of motivation. They come up with some very creative solutions to the visual problems that we present to them.

What can students expect in your class and what do you expect of them?

My expectations for my students is to find some joy in what they are creating and be able to express visually something that is meaningful to them. I hope to provide an environment where they have the freedom to investigate, try things and explore their ideas. We are teaching them skills in various media - drawing, color theory, painting, clay and glazing are all practiced. In 7th and 8th grade, the students go more in depth with these and other techniques. However, they are learning to not just re-create what they see. We try to teach them to think abstractly and improve their visual problem solving skills using these media. My students often surprise me with their creative solutions. I believe our future visionaries need these skills to solve some of the problems we are facing in the world today.

Some samples of work from 6th grade extended art students:



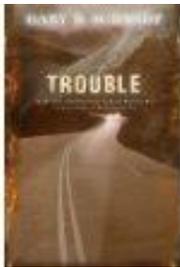
Kids' Corner



A poem based on the
book *Trouble* by Gary D.
Schmidt

Poetry by

Sheridan Bochniak
5th Grade
North Barrington School



Trouble

Why did you have to go, my brother?
To pass away,
Like one or another.

On that dreadful night, when you got hit,
When you were jogging along,
Quite physically fit.

I can imagine the crash, vague in my mind,
Like a camera's flash,
Right from behind.

You probably knew that it was over, at your steady pace
When, at that moment,
You saw the driver's face.

There was the scream, the boom, the yelp of alarm,
When Chay Chouan,
Desperately tried to bandage your arm.

He went to find help, a matter of fate,
And came back with a policeman,
But it was already too late.

You were losing too much blood, and your arm was not there ,
And to this day,
I still think that life is not fair.

How in the hospital, we thought you would live
And this is to Chay Chouan,
Who I will never forgive.

You did not live brother, and now you are dead,
You died days after,
On that hospital bed.

And as I read this to you, I know that you are in a better place
Yet there is still an empty hole,
Where there was once courage and grace.

And now I know that there are things in life that you cannot escape,
Like this, THE TROUBLE,
Which led to your horrible fate.

Kids' Corner

Continued ...

Alicia Parrish is one of five students across the nation to have their poem selected as a winner in a contest sponsored by Voices of Youth Advocates. She said that she chose mosquitoes for her topic because "I wanted to write about something that everyone could relate to and also feel strongly about." She added, "I like writing and things that people can envision and I like using a lot of imagery."

Poetry by

Alicia Parrish
7th Grade
Station Middle School



Like That Itch You Can't Scratch

Like the itch on your back that you can't reach
Like that strand of hair that just won't stay
Like that fish that just won't bite
They're like that song that you just can't get out of your head
Mosquitoes
When the air is moist and thick
And you feel as if you are breathing soup
That's when they strike
When the heat is unbearable
And your body is drained of energy to defend yourself
Against those pesky monsters
That's when they strike
But when the earth cools
The air thins
And all is calm
Bask in the peace
The quiet
Till the crickets
Come to play their music

Thanks to all the students, teachers and presenters who contributed to the BCGT newsletter this year!

If you have any ideas or suggestions for BCGT programs, website or newsletters, we would really like to hear from you. Please send us an email at bcgt@bcgt.org or contact one of our board members from our website at www.bcgt.org.

Thanks for your support! We look forward to seeing your work again next year.

A Big Thanks to our Lifetime Members

Evelyn Ackermann
Shona & Jagbir Ahuja
Rob and Joanne Aleksick
Sanjay Asija
Greg and Beth Bach
Jim and Gail Bach
Jeff and Deb Bakal
Donna Bapst
Dean and Sue Barsness
Brian and Kathleen Battle
Keri Bowman
Bill and Joan Bowyer
Dave and Melissa Buckley
Cai Family
Tom and Sharon Casaletto
Susan Cascino
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Canary Chia
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Mark and Susan Thorndyke
Ahmed and Nimi Tobaa
Judy Kosarek Tyler
Mike & Kathleen Uhran
Van Marwijk Kooy Family
Deborah Varwig
Manju and Indu Vence
Robert and Melinda VlK
Lei Wang
Bhama and Richard Winkler
Ronald and Deborah Workman
Libby Yang
Weiming Zhou



Barrington Council for the Gifted and Talented

Please Support Us!

BCGT is an organization of parents and educators whose common purpose is to support gifted education in District 220 by serving as a resource and advocate for gifted students, their families and faculty.

Your membership enables BCGT to:

- Host nationally and locally renowned speakers in the field of gifted education
- Provide parent and family networking opportunities such as coffees and family game nights
- Issue classroom grants: In the past, in addition to fulfilling the smaller, specific wishes of teachers, BCGT made the largest single donation ever, \$3,000, to help fund a pilot program at Sunny Hill which helps target gifted students in early elementary school
- Support legislative advocacy for gifted funding
- Publish and maintain BCGT's newsletter and website www.BCGT.org
- E-mail notification of programs, meetings and special events

We offer a District 220 Lifetime Membership! For your \$100 donation, you receive BCGT membership benefits for long as your children attend school in District 220. In addition to reduced membership fees, lifetime members will receive special recognition for their support on the BCGT website and in the newsletter.

Join Us Now!

Visit us on the web at www.BCGT.org



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Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail (required for us to send advance notice for BCGT events, newsletters and reminders):

Note: Your email address is kept strictly confidential

Please make your tax deductible contribution payable to BCGT:

- \$20 Family Membership
- \$100 Lifetime Membership*
- Donation

*" Lifetime Membership" means you will receive BCGT member benefits for as long as your children attend school in District 220.

To ensure receipt of our membership benefits, please fill in below:

I currently have children enrolled in District 220 extended services or self-contained programs:

yes no

schools:

Send your membership form to:

Keri Bowman
1459 South Shore Ct.
Barrington, IL 60010

membership@bcgt.org

Your comments or suggestions for speakers:

Please contact me, I would like to get more involved in BCGT

Please visit us at www.BCGT.org