



WE ARE SPARTANS

— ACHIEVEMENT RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY EMPATHY —

IMMS Messenger April 2015 Volume X Issue XXIX Indian Mound Middle School McFarland, WI

To date or not to date? A middle school question

By Alexcia Johnson
IMMS 6th Grade

What do you think about dating? What do think about middle-schoolers dating? When should kids start dating? Why do you think kids should/shouldn't date? Do you see any distractions in the classroom because of dating?

About a third of the students who responded to the IMMS Dating Survey held in March thought middle school was the best time to start dating. The majority also rated the dating scene at IMMS as a positive one.

Some teachers, who were asked similar questions, concurred about the benefits of dating, but added qualifications about age.

"I think kids should date. It's an excellent way to get to know a boy or girl," said Ms. Michels,

IMMS library assistant.

Family and Consumer Education teacher Mrs. Colle also agreed. She said, "It is good for building social skills, finding out what you like and don't like about possible future partners, good for finding out what socially acceptable behavior is for dating."

Most of the teachers think that kids are too young in middle school to date seriously, advising that they should wait until they are 16 for that. Mrs. Colle also added, "I think they are too young!"

"I think that developing relationships is developmentally appropriate, hanging out with groups of friends is appropriate, but having a traditional "date" is best to wait until age 16," specified Mr. Jondle, Vice Principal at IMMS.

One of the sixth-graders surveyed agreed with Mr. Jondle, saying, "Just to keep it low. Relationships shouldn't be at the total love level in middle school."

"I do not think middle-schoolers should date as they are too young. I think it complicates friendships in a way that middle school students are not mature for," said Mr. Kramer, IMMS teacher/guidance counselor.

A seventh-grade student surveyed echoed Mr. Kramer, saying, "They should not date until high school at least; seriously dating is how you find who you're going to marry. Middle-schoolers aren't ready."

"I think that some kids are just dating to look cool, and you should only date if you have found someone you really like. Also I know it is hard for some people to look into the future but you shouldn't go out with someone unless you can see a future with that person. I'm not saying if you can't picture a future with this person, but if you can definitely not see a good future with this person don't even bother," said one eighth-grader surveyed.

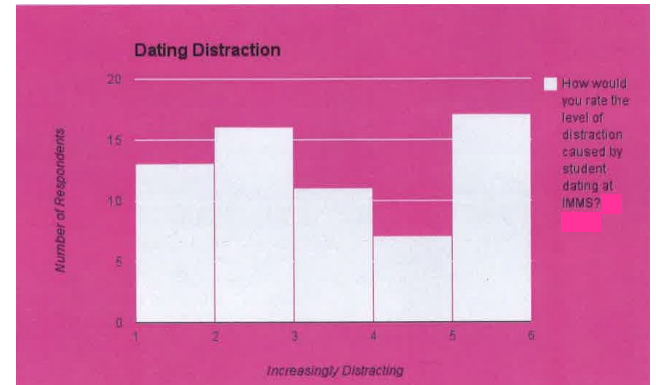
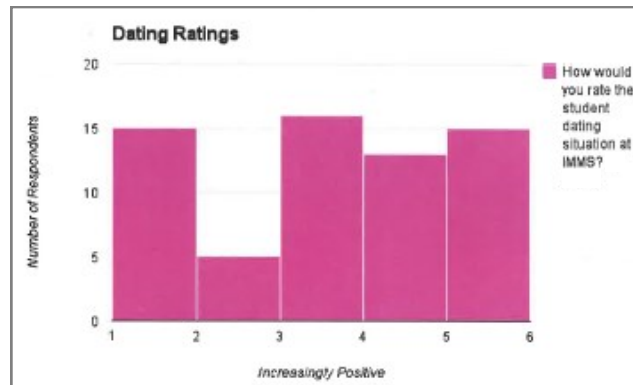
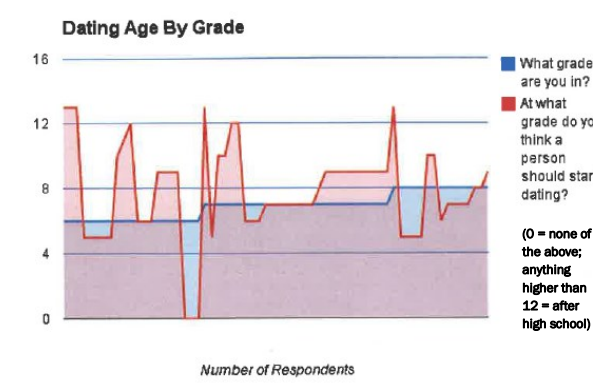
As to the disruption, students surveyed were divided with slightly more students saying dating was not a big distraction.

"As a former teacher, the biggest distraction I saw was 'drama' that trickled into the classroom if there was a change in relationship status or if there was jealousy between classmates," noted Mr. Jondle.

Even though most student respondents selected one of the middle school grades as the time to start dating, the single most common grade for starting dating was ninth grade.

Most of the students and teachers think that you should wait until high school or until you are mature enough to understand the consequences of breaking up. The next time you think about dating ... STOP and consider saving the drama for high school.

Art from ptxshark.com



IMMS students win signed footballs in exercise challenge

By Olivia Pili
IMMS 6th Grade

In February, 45 IMMS students participated in the Fuel Up to Play 60 program. Fuel Up to Play 60 is a program that was founded by the National Dairy Council and the NFL in collaboration with the USDA. The program encourages students to eat healthy food and exercise for at least 60 minutes per day.

In the end, the top two win-

ners received a NFL prize donated by the Milk Marketing Board. The two lucky winners of this year's IMMS Fuel Up to Play 60 were Kodiak and Jack, each winning a Packer signed football celebrating their win.

Jack, a winning sixth-grader, says the strategy for winning is "to do a lot of different activities," such as walking, exercising on the treadmill and working hard in gym class. What motivated Jack was the thought of

being healthy, happy and feeling good in the result of the exercise.

When the winning was announced a giant smile appeared on Jack's face; happiness was all you could see, and he was filled with surprise.

"It makes me want to exercise!" Jack commented after winning the signed football. With all his hard work, Jack still wants to continue making good decisions and being healthy.



IMMS students Jack and Kodiak pose with their winning footballs.

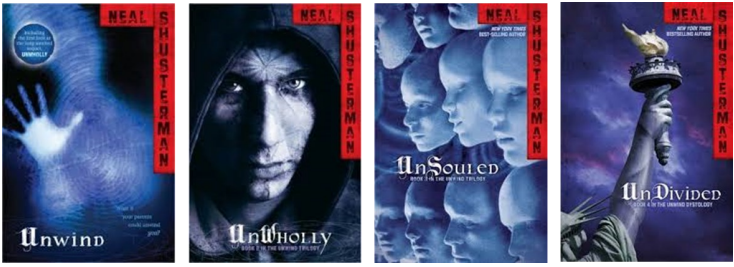
Staff photo

Unwind series: Don't miss dystopian suspense

By Avery Lawrence
IMMS 8th Grade

If you're in eighth grade, you probably remember that the book *Unwind* was one of the choices to read during the unit on the author Neal Shusterman. It was one of the darker series made by Shusterman, but definitely one of the best--if you can stomach it. I personally believe that the *Unwind* series is one of the most underrated dystopian books and is being overshadowed by *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*. Not that those aren't good books, both Suzanne Collins and Veronica Roth are great authors, but I have read both of their trilogies. And in my opinion? They are nothing compared to *Unwind*.

Unwind is a series taking place in a future America, after a second civil war. This is commonly referred to as the Heartland War, and it was fought over whether or not abortion should be illegal. Not only is this an issue going on now, but some pro-life or pro-choice people would be willing to go to war over this, making the chance that this could become a reality all the more possible. It is not stated when the Heartland War started in the books, and since a lot of the technology used is very possible in a few years, it



could happen very soon, possibly before 2030. The Bill of Life was passed shortly after the Heartland War ended, stating that from the ages of 13 to 18, young Americans could be "unwound," meaning having their bodies split apart and used for people who were badly injured. All the parts must be used. Most unwinding supporters call it being in a "divided state," neither dead nor alive.

The first book focuses mainly on three characters: Connor, a 16-year-old who was sent off to be unwound by his parents for his wild behavior; Risa, an orphan sent off to a harvest camp (official facility where unwinding surgeries are performed) when she messes up a piano performance; and Lev, a 13-year-old tithe (a child who is set apart as a religious offering and marked for unwinding from birth). A robust list of supporting characters, both friends and enemies, add to these main perspectives. The second book introduces parts pirates, who are

illegal unwinders looking to sell parts on the black market.

Another part of the law is the Stork Initiative. Storks are babies unwanted by their mothers but who cannot be aborted so are abandoned. The babies can be placed on doorsteps and often are raised by the unexpected families. Some families send the babies to orphanages.

So, what makes this dystopian series so great? Its atmosphere. The constant suspense of what could happen—since most things usually come so suddenly that you don't expect it, until you realize that there were many subtle hints leading up to it. That's the beauty of this series. Shusterman adds in many subtle things that you think nothing about, so when something happens, you find out they weren't as unimportant as you thought. It also keeps a dark and gritty tone throughout, leaving you on your toes whether something will happen or not.

SPOILERS: This next paragraph contains some spoilers,

though they're not major.

The covers also add some information. In the sequel, *Unwholly*, the man on the cover is Camus Comprix, with the starburst of skin on his forehead. The book explores the idea of what would happen if you could reassemble the best parts of different people into a whole. And in *Unsouled*, the third book, the many detached faces with one having its eyes open is part of the organ collection of a parts pirate. The book introduces a character with a disability and explores the idea of the value of such a person. In *Undivided*, the final book, the cover shows the new arm of Lady Liberty, which isn't supposed to rust. As it features the symbol of a reunited America, the book explores what it would take to bring the country to a resolution over the issues of unwanted children, unruly teenagers and processes to end suffering.

SPOILERS: Over.

I do believe that this series is very overlooked and definitely underrated in the realms of dystopia. So many things make this amazing, from the way it could actually happen in real life to the subtle imagery and suspense; almost everything is perfect. And don't worry, the ending's good, too. It's worth a read, if you ask me.

Consider Saturday school

By Alexcia Johnson
IMMS 6th Grade

We should have school on Saturday because the United States would become more advanced.

U.S. students are behind. Millions of children are far behind on their education, their reading abilities and logically thinking.

According to the OECD, 20 countries have higher rates of high school graduations than the United States. Poland has a high poverty level but all its students graduate. Poland also has strong student achievement. Compared to this and other developed nations, U.S. children rank 17th in reading and 31st in math.

"The American work force has some of the weakest mathematical and problem-solving skills in the developed world," according to an article in *The New York Times*.

What do other countries do to boost achievement? China is strict and disciplined, which means students get punished if they don't turn in their homework on time. Also China has more school days.

To increase achievement, U.S. kids from K-12 should have school on Saturday.

On one hand, school on Saturdays has some negatives. It would mean you have to give up one day of relaxing. And some people have sport activities, too. Could you give those up for better grades? And schooling?

On the other hand, school on Saturdays has more benefits. For one, school days could be shorter, perhaps from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Shorter days could mean more family time during the week. We also would have more time to do homework, which also could bring our grades up. Though schools could give less homework because students could finish it in class the next day; then teachers wouldn't have to grade so much.

Also, kids could get more sleep. Kids now usually wake up at 6 a.m. to get ready for school. That means, if they stay up late because of homework, they won't have a good night's sleep, which could cause bad health for young children. It also would be easier on parents because, with an earlier school start at 8 a.m., they have to worry about their kids. Also parents need their sleep, too. So, if they have to work late or something and have to get up at 6 a.m., they won't get enough sleep, which means they will be grumpy and crabby all day.

We can prevent that from happening. We can add school days like those countries that take pride in the education they bring to their children and society.

Vampire Academy features friendship, forbidden love

By Audrey McMillan
IMMS 6th Grade

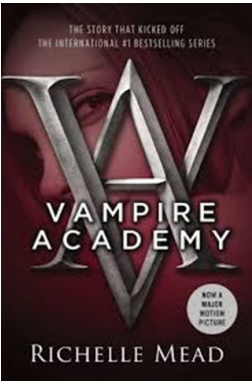
There are three different types of vampires in the *Vampire Academy* world: The Strigoi, the Moroi and the Dhampirs. The Strigoi who are immortal and evil vampires prey on the Moroi. Moroi are mortal vampires that, unlike the Strigoi, do not kill when they feed, instead they have a system of human feeders that willingly give their blood because of the endorphins contained in Moroi saliva. Then there are the Dhampirs, the perfect body guards to protect Moroi from the Strigoi; these protectors are half human and half vampire. Dhampirs are raised to be guardians assigned to Moroi in the outside world so that the Strigoi cannot kill them.

Academies are places where Moroi and Dhampirs can learn

to control their abilities and be safe from the Strigoi that lurk just outside of the gates.

Lissa is the last living member of the royal Dragomir line. Two years ago, Lissa's family was killed in a car accident that almost killed her Dhampir best friend Rose, who to everyone's surprise came out of the crash with only a few scratches.

After the accident, Lissa and Rose ran away from the academy for two entire years until they are dragged back by a guardian named Dimitri Belikov. When they get there, Rose is almost thrown out due to her wild and rebellious nature that has gotten Lissa and her in trouble more than once; but,



with a little compulsion magic, Rose is allowed to stay. Rose has missed two years of guardian training and is severely behind. Dimitri volunteers to give her personal training so she can catch up with everything she has missed. But when

Rose finds that she has a growing attraction to her much older mentor what will she do to shake this little crush? And will he feel the same way?

What happens when the very thing that forced Lissa and Rose to leave the academy comes back with even more wrath? Rose is concerned about all these things and tries to persuade Lissa to once again run away. But Lissa is stubborn and

Echoing a Spartan Challenge: Kids should be more active

By Patrick Heasty
IMMS 6th Grade

One of the third quarter's Spartan challenges was: "Which grade is the most active?" This article supplements this idea.

I live for exercise. In this world though, not as many people support it as it should be supported. I do admit, I enjoy sitting around, but that is NOT an all-the-time thing. Some reasons I will cover about why kids should be more active are: Kids

are clinically proven to be smarter by exercising; it helps your body in many ways, and there are many different ways for kids our age to exercise.

First, kids are smarter after they exercise. According to the Peak Fitness article "Exercise Benefits Children's Brain Function," kids' exercising helps many parts of the brain. They say that it helps increase the flow of oxygen and blood to the brain, reduces stress, and brightens mood, and finally it increases growth of new nerve cells. This

shows that "an exercise a day keeps the stupid away!"

Next, Ace Fitness reports in "Top 10 Reasons Children Should Exercise" that there are also many physical benefits of exercise. Some of them include: healthy body weight, strong muscles, joints and bones, it delays the development of heart disease, and finally it also improves coordination and motor skills. This proves another one of my ingenious points: you can have muscles the width of a chair, if you exercise.

For my last stroke of wisdom, there are many ways you can exercise. In "Motivating Kids to Be Active," Kidshealth.org offers many suggestions for teen exercise. Biking, skateboarding, yoga, and working out are only a few of the many choices. This shows that exercise can be found in many activities.

So next time you are bored, get your lazy butt off that couch and go **EXERCISE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!** Because you get smarter, huge muscles, and it's fun.

The Boy in the Tunnel: A Sudden Movement

By Claire Hall

IMMS 6th Grade

Previously:
I tell Laine, my good friend, about all my worries, my dream, and even about the boy I saw across the street, watching me. That same boy told me to run in my dream. He was everywhere—at school and in my mind—telling me to run. Telling me that she—the tunnel shadow calling my name—is coming.

When she asks about the boy’s name, I begin to hear everyone’s thoughts, and I hear him. *Baron. My name is Baron.* I feel like I am this...Baron. *He can read my mind, I think. He can read my mind!!! How? That's impossible!*

Nothing's impossible. There's always a way, I hear in my mind.

Thank you. I think back.

You're welcome, Olga.

Chapter 2

“Sound waves enter the ear canal and ... Olga.”

How did that happen? He was there ... and then he disappeared. How could I hear everyone's thoughts? Maybe I am going crazy. Maybe I should be in an insane asylum.

“It makes the eardrum vibrate. This action moves the tiny chain of bones in the middle ear, OLGA.”

How did I not notice him at school?!

Maybe he is a vision. But Laine did see him... What if we are both crazy?..

“The last bone in this chain ‘knocks’ on the membrane window of the cochlea and makes the fluid in the cochlea move. OLGA!”

I don't understand why we have to learn this anyway. It's so boring ... Wait! What did she just say?! I sit up straighter.

“The fluid movement then triggers a response in the hearing nerve ...”

That's it! I think as I smile. Maybe you don't have to 'speak' to hear someone. Maybe the waves are so high pitched, no one can hear them except me. The brain could transmit waves, right? I better pay attention ... My thoughts are interrupted when Mrs. Carhart stops talking. She walks over, her pointer in hand, while her usually heart-shaped face looks like a squashed pineapple.

“Am I interrupting you? Maybe—since you are not in this class, and you seem to know so much more than me, and because you won't listen—you would like to teach? I am getting very tired.”

The class giggles with excitement. *Perfect, I think. The straight 'A' girl is going to get into trouble.* “Mrs. Carhart, I do have a question.”

“About time you entered this class, Olga. You are very late with your mind,” snaps Mrs. Carhart. “Now what is your question, Miss Harper?”

“Well ...” I was afraid to go on. “If your ear detects waves, well ... does your brain somehow send waves out? I mean waves that are so high pitched, most people can't hear it, but some people can ... Which would be mind reading??”

“Silly girl,” she says as she pats my head. “You spend too much time reading. Many people have thought of that.”

“But it doesn’t explain why people can read minds.”

“If you still stand by your question, go look it up.” The class snickers some more. “Actually, that is a wonderful idea. Everyone can research the brain and write an essay on whether you agree with Mrs. Harper or disagree, then explain why.” She pauses for effect. “That will be your homework. It is due next Friday.”

Flash. BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP.

It must be a fire alarm. I think. As I start to stand up, something falls on me.

Everyone starts screaming. I try to get up, but I can’t move. Everything starts to hurt. My head starts to throb. I manage to lift my hand up to my head and I feel something like water. I drop my hand to see what it is and then I see blood.

Ohmygosh.

Ohmygosh.

My eyes widen with horror.

I'm going to die!

“Everyone find a partner, and get out!” Mrs. Carhart looks at me. “I’ll take care of Olga.” Her head whips around. “IF YOU DON’T WANT TO DIE, GET OUT!!” Softly, she picks me up, and says, “It will be okay. You will get out alive.” I start to close my eyes, because everything hurts so much and I just want it to all end.

“Miss Olga Harper, do not close your eyes on me,” she says as she starts running. We hear a siren.

“I’m going to die,” I whimper.

Tears glisten in her eyes. “No you’re not ... wait.”

She puts me down and then I hear her screaming, “OVER HERE! SOMEONE’S HURT OVER HERE!”

Then she comes back, picks me up, and tells me, “Everything will be fine. Someone’s coming.”

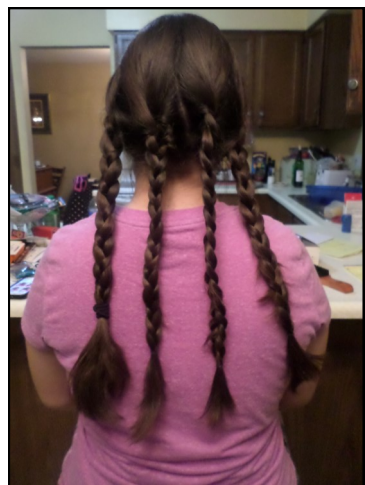
A minute later, someone does come, and when he looks at me, I recognize him instantly.

“Well, well, look at who we have here,” he says and sees my eyes widen as I stare in disbelief. “Aww. I was expecting a friendlier welcome this time.” He smiles. “Do you know who I am?”


“Yes.” I tremble. “You’re ...” He finishes my sentence.

“Baron.” Then he gives a small chuckle. “Took you long enough.”

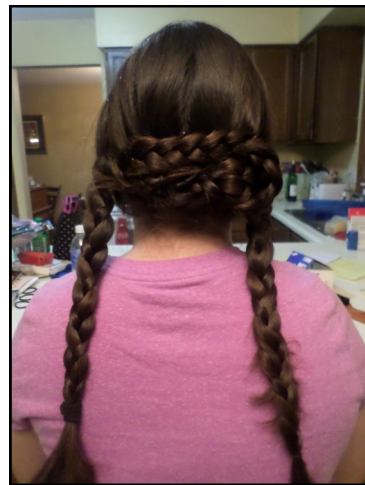
How To: Braided Bun by Audrey McMillan



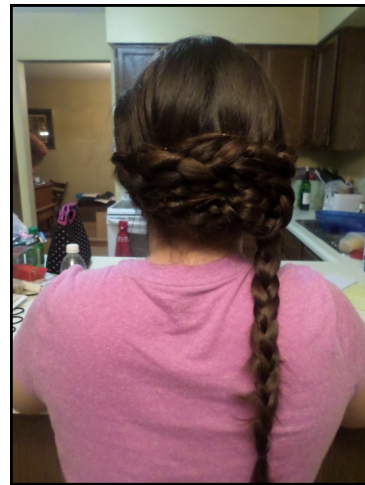
Braid your hair in four separate braids, securing each with hair ties.



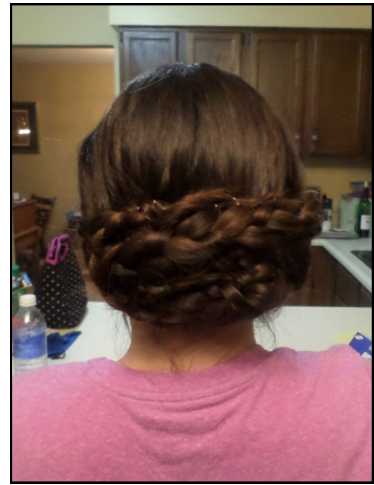
Bring the braid on the middle left toward the right, folding braid as necessary and securing with bobby pins.



Then do the same with the middle right braid, crossing it over the first and bringing it towards the left, folding braid as necessary and securing with bobby pins.



Then bring the one on the left end to the right, wrapping it around the top, folding braid as necessary and securing with bobby pins.



Finally, wrap the braid on the right end, bringing it to the left along the bottom, folding braid as necessary and securing with bobby pins. Then savor your masterpiece!

The Game Changer: Little Mac

By Patrick Heasty

IMMS 6th Grade

Previously:
Mac shuffled out of the hospital after a doctor warned him against the dangers of getting another concussion. He wondered, *Would he ever box again?*

Chapter 2

Mac strode through the park, thinking. Out of habit, he arrived at his training gym. Mac thought for a second and then flung open the door. Though he was tired, he still decided it might be a good idea.

The immediate sound he heard was

the thud of fists on old sweaty punching bags, and he took a deep breath of the smell of bile and more sweat. Then, he turned and walked out. In the end, he had just decided he wasn’t good enough for that gym. He would have to win something to go back there.

Back at his apartment, Mac watched cartoons and ate Lean Cuisine for the remainder of the evening. But all the while, he thought about boxing.

“I shudda trained there,” he said regretfully. He wallowed in sorrow for the rest of the night, sitting on the beat up, fossil of a couch.

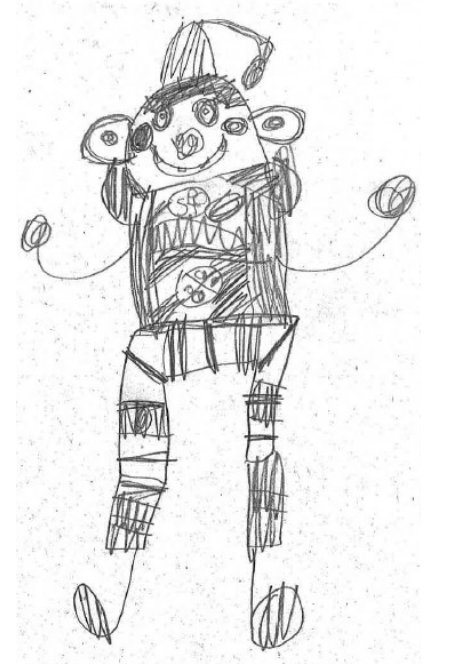
Morning came too soon, and Mac found himself on the floor, bringing back the memories of yesterday’s challenges. Reluctantly, he rose and got ready to go out.

Through the day, Mac wandered until he saw the boxing arena, neon lights ablaze.

“Got nothin’ better to do,” he muttered as he jogged to the registration booth. The loud noise immediately entered his ears and filled him with the lust to box. This lust was soon dimmed by an incredibly stupid teenage registration assistant, who decided to make his life as miserable as possible.

“First name?” he said with a nasally, overwhelmingly annoying voice.

“Mac,” he said. “Little Mac.”



Doodlin’ around

IMMS student Payton Jarrett created this line drawing.

Student News

Yahara River Writers' top ten

Four IMMS students' writing/cartoon entries made it into the top ten in the Yahara River Writers' Competition. Thousands of entries were submitted from all over southern Wisconsin. These students will attend the Top Ten Writer's Workshop in May: Matt Amrhein for top ten cartoon, Ella Weaver for top ten editorial, Matthew Moyses for second place editorial, and Sara Yavas for second place short story.

Artists' work on exhibit

Britney Lazo-Guevera, Emily Gates and Brett Connor had their art on exhibit at the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art in Madison from Feb. 20 through March 8. The students were celebrated at an artists' reception at the museum.

Spelling Bee winners

IMMS eighth-grader Matthew Mandli competed in the State Spelling Bee in Madison on March 28. He was eligible to compete after placing third in the Regional Spelling Bee in Stoughton on March 4.

Matthew won the IMMS Spelling Bee with the word Polska. Runner-up, sixth-grader Alex Daspit also was eligible to attend the Regional Bee.



UW Regional Science Bowl competitors

Two teams of five IMMS students competed against 18 other teams in the regional division of the U.S. Department of Energy National Science Bowl. This was a fast-paced competition involving a variety of challenging math and science questions.

The sixth-grade team of Gavin Wood, Jacob Hummer, Nick Molitor, Alex Daspit, and Kristy Zheng were strong competitors against teams mostly composed of seventh and eighth graders. The team of Caleb Blair, Leah Russell, Josh Fearing, and Skyler Li were unbeatable until the finals. After competing in 12 rounds, they earned the silver medal.

Spartan Spotlight



Photo by Audrey McMillan

Meet Ale the gamer

By Audrey McMillan

IMMS 6th Grade

Alejandro Ruiz is a sixth grader here at IMMS and loves video games. Ale enjoys games such as first person shooters, fighting games and "Minecraft."

He says, "My favorite part about video games is that you don't have to listen to other people complain, and you can just be you while not having to play with other people." Ale doesn't like to play games with other people and when he plays games such as "Minecraft," he likes playing alone instead of on a multi-player server.

His favorite type of game is a first person shooter. He enjoys this type game because it has a story to it and you don't start at the very beginning every time. "It's got great graphics," says Ale. "It's not like 'Minecraft' where it's all fake and animated. It's like you're really in that world!"

Alejandro also enjoys combat games. "I like it because I can do stuff that I obviously can't do in real life. I don't have to worry about the consequences of these actions, like getting hurt."

Ale also loves "Minecraft" because of all the building you can do and the combat on survival mode. "You can build your dream house, and the only thing you have to worry about is how to use all that space!" He also says that he prefers survival mode to creative mode. "You can do so much more on survival! You can enchant things and collect objects, too." He likes to find mine shafts and villages. "I like trading with villagers for gems like emeralds, food, or even just building material."

Ale plays video games to escape from the real world, even if it is just for a moment.



Robotics success

The IMMS Robotic Team, bottom photo, brought home two trophies from its first VEX IQ tournament at Xavier Middle School in Appleton on Feb. 14. The team of Devon Lee, Ethan O'Rourke, and Simon Dingle took first place in the skills challenge and won the award for best overall robot design. The winning robot was a modified/advanced version of the Clawbot, the first robot you build in this robot series. This advanced version sported advanced claw mechanics and a better arm. The team of Caenan Cremens, Patrick Heasty and Will Karls (top photo) took third place in the teamwork rankings. They had 69 points in the finals and were beaten at 72 by two other qualifying teams.

Staff photos



Cliques: What's the 'Mean Girl' status at IMMS?

By Kaila LeFave

IMMS 8th Grade

Among the pale green lockers of Indian Mound Middle School you will find scores of children cooped away in the same friend group, talking to the same people day after day. Mingling is not a common practice at the middle school.

One student says, "I think people are still trying to find out their rank in the social classes of middle school and that there is definitely segregation among the students."

When asked about the different "cliques" of middle school, one eighth-grader responded, "Well, I mean there are many different cliques like you have the smart people, the jocks or sporty people; there are the populars and a bunch of miscellaneous groups, but I

think cliques are really what you make them."

When assistant principal Mr. Jondle was asked if he was aware of the power cliques have over the student body, he didn't hesitate to answer. "We see many cliques but they eventually change into other groups as the students discover more about themselves and who they want to be."

According to KidsHealth.org: "The thing that makes a clique is that they leave some kids out on purpose. Usually one or two popular kids control who gets to be in the clique and who gets left out."

This doesn't seem to be the case at Indian Mound, when asked about their "cliques" most students said that their cliques were nice and fun. Of Mrs. Halverson's 6/7 hour language arts class with 21 stu-

dents in it, 95 percent of students said their clique is kind and accepting. The remaining 5 percent said their clique isn't very kind and can be bullies.

Bullies can act in many different ways, such as name calling, teasing, physically hurting their victims, spreading non-truthful rumors, exclusion, etc. All of those things can cause emotional damage to the victims that can follow them into adulthood. Five percent is too big of a number in the eyes of IMMS staff on the topic of children being bullied. The school's goal is to have zero percent of IMMS students experience bullying.

Even with all the precautions and tools given to the victims of bullying, the question still stands, what damage is being done to the remaining 5 percent?