



WE ARE SPARTANS

ACHIEVEMENT RESPECT RESPONSIBILITY EMPATHY

IMMS Messenger June 2017 Volume XII Issue XXXVIII Indian Mound Middle School McFarland, WI

Mental illness is no joke

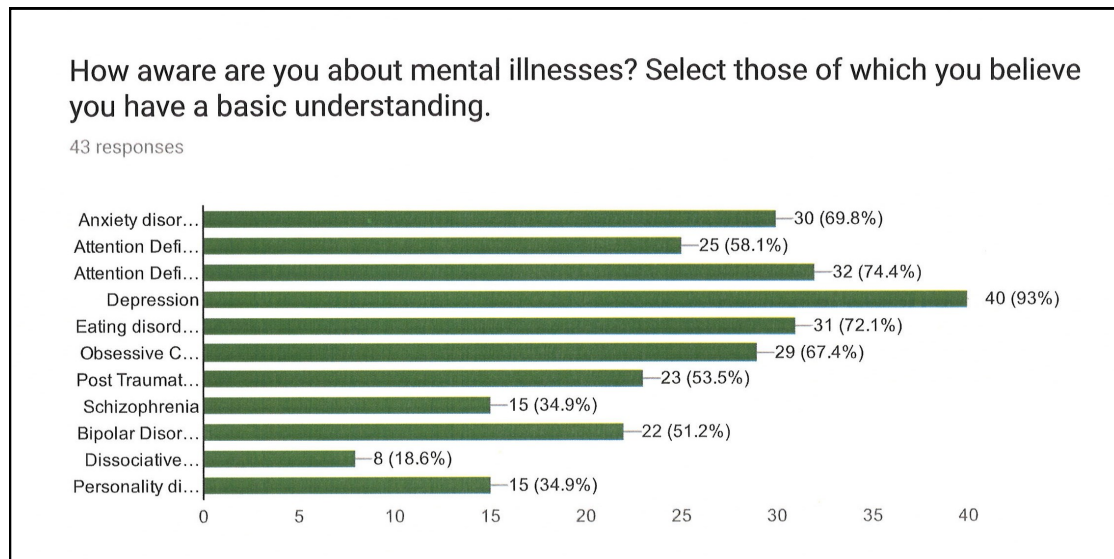
By Audrey McMillan

IMMS 8th Grade

You've probably heard people talking about mental health before. You probably even have a basic understanding of what it is. In a recent Mental Illness survey at IMMS students responded that they believed they had an understanding of many mental illnesses. Some disorders had more knowledge around them than others: 93% of those surveyed claimed they knew what depression was, while only 18% said they understood what a dissociative disorder was. But many people aren't aware of mental illnesses and what they are. Mental illnesses are incredibly common: 1 in 5 adults experience some form of mental illness while 1 in 25 adults suffer from a serious mental illness. Chances are you know someone with a mental illness.

As common as mental illnesses are many people don't know a lot about them. Your mental health is incredibly important and just as valid as your health in any other part of your body. Mental health is just what it sounds like, how healthy your mind is. Brain chemicals out of balance can cause an illness. Stress, trauma, or loss of a loved one are examples of things that could trigger an imbalance and lead to a mental illness. When you have a mental illness, it's like you're sick all the time except the crummy feeling is in your head. Except when you have a mental illness there isn't an antibiotic or a vaccine, and you can't avoid it by washing your hands. However there are treatment options, and it is important to seek help if you need it.

Because many people don't understand what mental illnesses are, there is a lot of stigma around them. Stigma associates a condition or label with a feeling that you want to avoid someone with it. Stereotyping a condition, such as mental ill-



TO GET HELP

If you think one of your friends may be struggling with mental illness; talk to them about it. The best thing you can do is show them that you care and that you are there for them. If you are worried that they might try to hurt themselves, you must ask an adult for help. Your friend might not be happy with you, but it will help them in the long run. If you are concerned with your mental health, it is important to ask for help. Talking to a parent or trusted adult is a good way to start. You also can bring it up to your doctor. Mental illnesses are treatable. You can receive help as soon as you are willing to ask for it. Different treatment options include various forms of therapy and medication.

If you would like to learn more about mental illnesses; the National Alliance For Mental Illness, or NAMI, is a reliable source with lots of information on different illnesses.

Check out signs that distinguish normal vs. concerning behaviors on page 3.

ness, can cause people to avoid those suffering and make them feel alone and afraid to ask for help. As part of ARRE time this year, students agreed that people in this school can be hurting and identified ways to help them feel accepted. Finding ways to eliminate the stigma associated with mental illness is one of these ways.

In the survey on mental illnesses, respondents indicated they did not want to avoid people with mental illnesses. That was true even when they did not know much about them. Although some illnesses were seen with a more negative view than others. People admitted to not wanting to be friends with people who have OCD, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and personality disorder. These are all disorders that are often made

light of in social media and films.

The positive of not avoiding students with mental illness does not translate into avoiding hurting them. It would seem many kids at IMMS don't truly grasp their insensitivity, or hurt they can cause, since there are many jokes being made. It isn't uncommon to hear "trigger" jokes at our school. These jokes label people triggered for being upset by something or being unhappy with a situation.

Ms. Stokes, IMMS health and physical education teacher, is very passionate about how these jokes effect students with a mental illness. "Triggered isn't an emotion, it is a term used in mental health to describe something that sets off someone with a mental illness," she said.

When you make a trigger

joke, you are showing that you would rather get a pat on the back for your laugh than protect someone's feelings.

You also might recall Ms. Stokes making a video about the "kill yourself" jokes that are floating around school. Telling someone to kill themselves is not a joke. Some people with or without mental illnesses feel so bad about themselves or the world that they might think your "joke" is a real "solution." Every 16 seconds someone in the U.S. dies by suicide; it is not a joke. How do you know that you are not "joking" around someone who is ready to end everything that is good in their lives or a person who has lost someone by suicide?

So, what can you do? When you see someone making an offensive joke, say something to

stop it. If everyone does their part it will create a snowball effect until these jokes are a thing of the past.

Another strategy is being aware that the media does not always present mental illness in a correct way. This can paint a very negative picture about mental illness.

One student surveyed said, "I have seen many movies where they take a certain mental illness and amplify it or make it seem a lot more dramatic than it actually is."

If all you know about mental illness is from television and what you overhear, make an effort to learn more.

A third idea is to cultivate compassion. To counteract a lack of compassion toward those with mental illness, learn to understand these ailments are just as serious as physical ones. Mental illnesses are real even if we can't see them. If people came to school looking like how they felt, some people would have black eyes and broken legs. If we hold doors for people in crutches, why can't we show the same empathy to those with a mental illness?

One person surveyed said, "Mental illness is a chemical imbalance in the brain, just like diabetes is a chemical imbalance in the blood. We wouldn't tell a diabetic suffering from insulin deficiency to cheer up and snap out of it."

This comment perfectly lays out how we can change our outlook toward those suffering from a mental illness. It is important for people to know that mental illness isn't an "attitude" or a "mindset." Mental health needs to be recognized.

Ms. Brunett, the IMMS school psychologist, talked about how your mental health is just as relevant as your physical health. "Mental health is a part of who you are, and everyone needs to learn skills on how to be emotionally and physically healthy," she said.



Photo by Forrest T. Waddell

On the right track

Members of the IMMS track team get running during an April practice session during 2017 season.

Poetry

Name Please...

What is a name?
A Social game?
Yeah I think that's right;
Well, not quite.
What is **my** name?
That is not a game,
At the end of the day.
I'm made not to pray,
I may be remembered.
I am a member;
Of this society.
Though **I** get no anxiety,
And this may frighten thee
But In the end **I** am free.
Label **me** how I want to be.
Watch **me** sprout like a tree.
Start to *see*-through
The origin, Hebrew
Not **me**.
Remember **I** am 3-D
I don't have *shame*.
What's **my** name?
Well it's the key,
To adversity.
By Zachary Gunderson

Bet you wish you could...

Talk
Bet you wish you could,
Your Way To A
Championship
Bet you wish you could,
Make a Statement
Bet you wish you could,
Redeem Yourself
Bet you wish you could,
Wake up to do something special.
Bet you wish you could,
Feel Good About
Living?
By Zachary Gunderson

an absent soul

won't have to cry no more,
for my baby's comin home.
no more tears, no more sorrow,
just warm embrace, love-no lace.
used to beat up over her thought,
now that she's back the only
black i see isn't in her heart
or her eyes but in the
start of a fresh love.
won't have to cry no more,
for my baby's comin home.
after two years, fears left for tomorrow,
purely a mask, drunk-no flask.
"may her soul be with christ,"
i could hear them say,
her pale skin, a wood box
all hail the tears, they come
down, my tomorrow fears come today.
won't have to cry no more,
for my baby's comin home.
finally she's here, in my arms shes home,
no longer in a shadow, in love-no arrow.
to draw and laugh,
smile and enjoy
my new life in awe,
new memories to be, but
the love always remained.
won't have to cry no more,
for my baby's comin home.
won't have to cry no more,
my baby's home,
she's home.
By Wren Bailey

Greed

I imagine you as
A bag of chips.
The bottomless kind.
You're never halting,
Continuing to approach,
Nothing.
Deeper and deeper in the bag.
You have no limitations.
Pound after pound,
Metric ton after Metric ton.
You have no boundaries.
Truckloads after Truckloads,
Vessels after vessels.
You blast off to expand,
Rocket after rocket.
An accretive load.
Piling up.
All you want is,
More!
More!
More!
Just remember,
Who *fuels* that bag of chips.
By Zachary Gunderson

The Media...

Click
On Air
8:00am
"Colin Kaepernick takes a Knee."
"Pense deletes an email address."
"Trump flashes anger towards congress."
10:00am
Just as cold as liquid nitrogen.
Mind control force that,
Changes laws
Changes polls.
Click
On Air
6:00pm
"Democrats protest polls."
"Wrestling team makes it to state."
"Trump disrespect the democratic Con-
gress."
7:00 pm
 $\frac{2}{3}$ wrong
Is this what we need?
Why can't it be,
Click
On Air
8:00am
"School Shooting at Red Oak High
School."
"Protest works for ratification for new
amendment."
"New technology advancement closer to a
cure for cancer."
7:00pm
Like this.
People **do** need help around the country.
Not just in the rich lives.
With no political bias.
Even better would be,
Showing us the world.
By Zachary Gunderson

Dreams

Hold on to your dreams
as you are afraid to let go
You need to achieve it
so don't mention no
Another after another
accepting you can
So don't stop now
and create a plan
Hold on to you dreams
and don't let go
For there is good
that you need to show
By Katie Hildebrandt

A Day of Color

Dusty Violet skies
The color of Fresh Grape Juice
and Soft Amethyst
The Deepest of Aqua seas make way
to Pistachio Ice Cream fields
Lemon Ice houses reflect off
the Early Morning Sun
Bathing the street
In Dark Chocolate shadows
By Dana Olson

Dear Baby Girl,

Your blooming fuchsia cheeks
and sugared plum smile
light up my day
like the early morning sun
Your soft meadow skin and
French chocolate eyes
tickle me with elation
Dear Baby Boy,
Your warm, caramel laugh and
powder-blush pink feet
make me smile wider than the horizon
Your mid-day mocha hair
and small, buttercup fingers
fill my heart with a joy I don't know that I
can contain
You--my loves--are all I will ever need
Through rain or shine
Heartbreak or happiness
You
Are all
I will
Ever
Need
By Dana Olson

Field of Frost

6:00, The break of dawn,
A dreary blaze piercing the horizon,
The world, a dull shade of *grey*,
standing in my field I shiver, my clothes
useless against the *frigid* air
leaves, *brown* and *brittle*, trees, *bare* and
frosty,
The sun finely greets me at the horizon,
dull and cold.
As I start to leave I am stopped dead,
Time *freezes*.
My field comes to life with color,
Like *magic*, *grass glistens*,
trees shine,
leaves twinkle,
golden.
The beauty grasps hold of me
frozen dew sparkles in the *sunlight*,
The trees, an alluring shade of *brown*,
The leaves showing their last *greenness*,
And then it's gone,
Time continues, the world, dull again,
the damage is done,
I can't move, the memory, mesmerizing
As the *glow* gets higher in the *sky*, warm-
ness flows through me,
I wonder if *fall* is making a last stand,
I am awoken from my trance as the
school bell rings,
I begin my long hike to the school,
it doesn't feel long this time.
rejuvenated,
My field has given me *energy* I have nev-
er experienced before,
Like a soft and sweet vigor that you feel
with a beloved pet,
everlasting, *unexplainable*, *beautiful*,
Every year I feel that *lost energy* as my
field comes to life,
I now know even in the darkest times of
life there is always light.
By Cooper Hiltbrand

Sea Flower Queen

The Rain Queen
Was A sea Flower
With Mirror-like Time
For her name Was that Of a ghost
What darkness Had held That night
Let love melt In a pot Of porcelain smoke
Give Color to the Dead sky
Embrace Broken breath Of eternity
Desire From naked Champagne kisses
Devour The rhythm of The marble universe
By Wren Bailey
When the gardens of life produce fruit,
we cherish them.
When the fruit of life grow up, we miss
them.
When the fruit fall in love, we help them.
When the garden's life wavers, we feel
pained.
But when a Mother Earth falls sick to
pollution, we ignore her.
Her temperature one degree higher, we
ignore her.
Her gardens ignore her at the most needed
time, we need her.
When will she fall to diseased time?
When will she fight back for her sanity?
When will she start helping the fruit grow
to realize her pain?
When will she, the Mother Earth turn
back against us?
Will she?
Will she help us in our time of need?
If we grace her with a good deed?
Never again shown love, if we ignore her
more.
Will she, if we help her by cutting pollu-
tion out of our diets?
The taste of her love ever at the back of
our throats, as she dies.
As she dies it's too late to say "we will
stop this madness"
Help us this day, as we repent our sins to
the Mother Earth.
We say we're sorry, but are we really?
Will we call on her in this time of need?
Will we really see what is needed,
Or are potato chips and leather coats all
we need?
What about: air, water, wood for housing,
and what about us?
What about the children who will become
sick from poisoning?
What about our true meaning?
What Is our true meaning?
To hunt? To play? To reproduce? To sur-
vive? No! We were hunter-gatherers!
But now all we do Is office work, school-
ing, and procrastination.
What are we really?
Who are we really?
We are the cool breeze in a warm summer
day!
We are the ripples on the surface of the
pond!
We are humankind,
And we should start acting like both of
the words in that label!
But will we do it to save OUR Mother
Earth?
Will we?
By Morgan Sommers

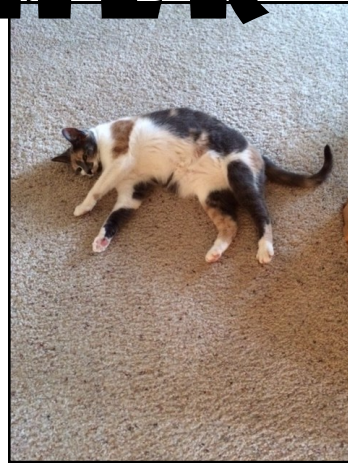
TEACHER'S PET



Ms. Weishan's Rajia



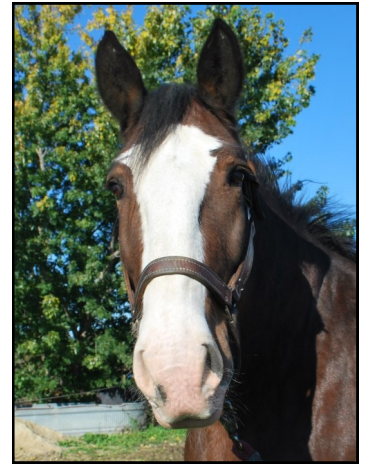
Mr. Marrese-Wheeler's Shadow



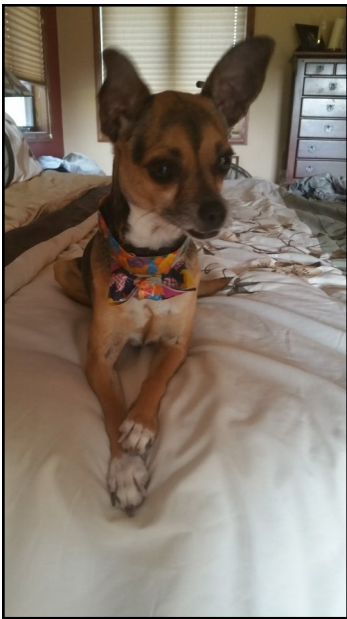
Ms. Brunett's Luna



Ms. Peterson's Benny



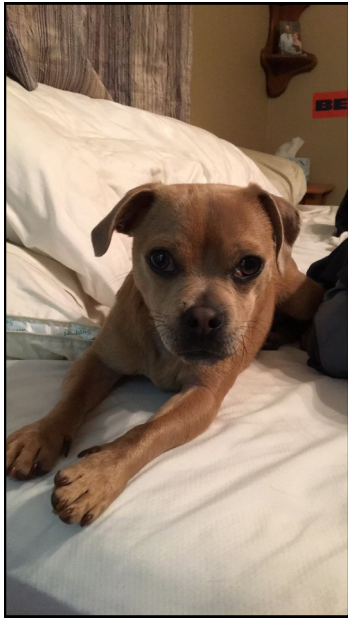
Ms. Airgood's Angel



Ms. Bailey's Steve



Ms. Sutherland's Kahlua



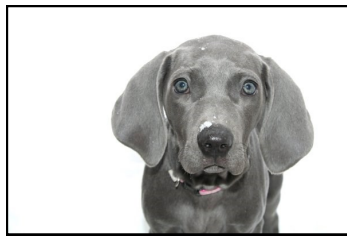
Ms. Burke's Peanut



Swan's Wicket, Marbles & Lola



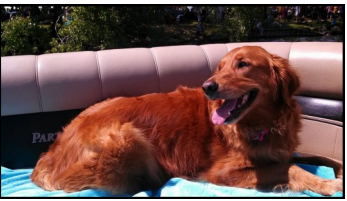
Ms. Barnett's Piper



Ms. Mallegni's Sapphire



Ms. Pili's Basil & Sage



Mr. Heuer's Lutsen



Ms. Colle's Daisy



Ms. Temby's Mowgli



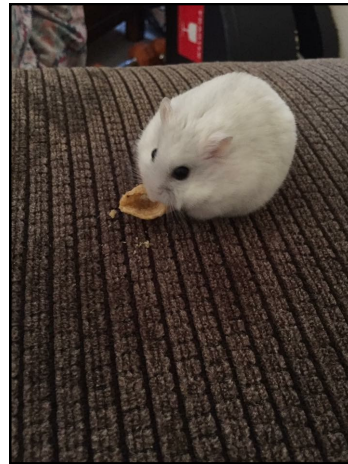
Ms. Neal's Ruby



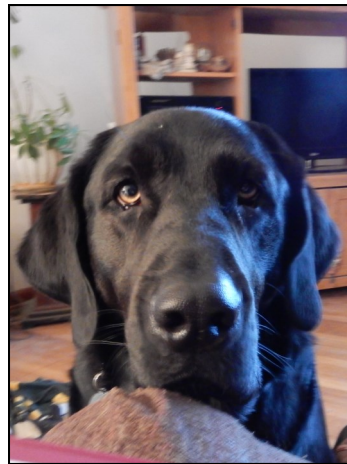
McGinn's Calihan & Rudolph



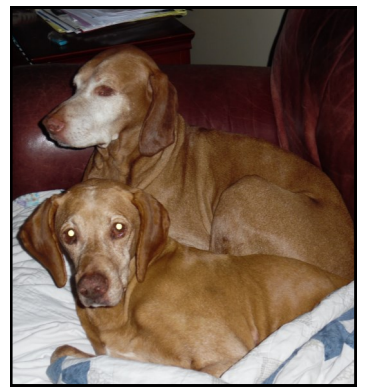
Ms. Lemens' Cobb



Ms. Winter's Humphrey



Ms. Stokes' Stanley



Ms. Burse's Kira & Riley



Mr. Kinnaman's Cooper



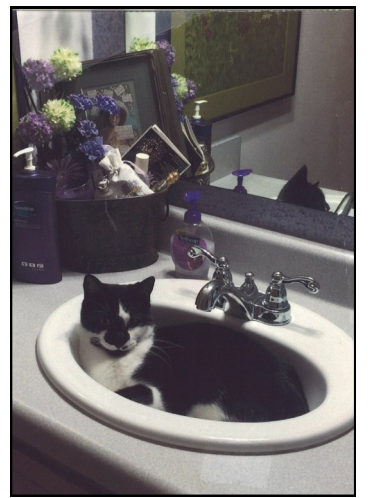
Ms. Younger's Leo



Ms. Runde's Oliver



Ms. Hershey's Annie



Ms. Hickey's Buck

Crying in middle school: Is it normal or a concern?

IMMS Messenger June issue contributors include: Callie Buchanan, Claire Hall, Audrey McMillan, Forrest Waddell. To participate, contact Adviser Ms. Ndlovu at NdlovuT@mcfdsd.org.

Messenger staff

When facing an emotional challenge, IMMS counselor Ms. Runde recommends taking time to sleep on the issue. Many times students will wake with a better perspective, she said.

In the article "Normal Teenage Behaviour vs. Early Warning Signs of Mental Illness," author Jaimie Byrne from the organization Friends for Mental Health writes, "It's important to

remember that no one sign means that there is a problem. It's important to examine the: nature, intensity, severity and duration of a problem."

Byrne said these behaviors, if prolonged, might cause concern beyond the normal, so look for:

- Decrease in enjoyment and time spent with friends and family.
- Significant decrease in school performance.

- Strong resistance to attending school or absenteeism.
- Problems with memory, attention or concentration.
- Big changes in energy levels, eating or sleeping patterns.
- Physical symptoms (stomach aches, headaches, backaches).
- Feelings of hopelessness, sadness, anxiety, crying often.
- Frequent aggression, disobedience or lashing out verbally.
- Excessive neglect of personal appearance or hygiene.

- Substance abuse.
 - Dangerous or illegal thrill-seeking behavior.
 - Is overly suspicious of others.
 - Sees or hears things that others do not.
- Another tip Ms. Runde has is writing out your feelings on paper before posting them on social media. If your feelings change, you might not want to drag the emotional heat of yesterday into your present by having to revisit it online.

State middle school teacher of the year works at IMMS

Department of Public Instruction

In a surprise ceremony at her school, Jill Runde, a school counselor at IMMS, was named Wisconsin's 2017-18 Middle School Teacher of the Year.

State Superintendent Tony Evers made the announcement during an all-school assembly. As part of the Teacher of the Year honor, Runde will receive \$3,000 from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation.

"Teaching is a career for optimists. People who see the potential in each student and meet challenges with innovative solutions that improve the lives and education of our kids," Evers said. "A Teacher of the Year recipient inspires the young people in their school and their colleagues in the school and community. It is an honor to recognize educators who do so much for Wisconsin's public schools."

"Learning is truly a three-legged stool: the emotional and social legs are equally as important as the intellectual development of our youth," said Runde of her educational philosophy. She notes that society's unsolved problems such as poverty, homelessness, and untreated

mental illness — come to school in the form of trauma that inhibits the potential of children in the classroom. Runde works to unpack the trauma and give children coping strategies to succeed.

While at McFarland High School, Runde founded the "Tolerance and Diversity Awareness" improvisational troupe, which had participating junior and senior students performing skits on topics such as bullying, stereotyping, teen suicide, and drugs and alcohol. At the middle school where she now works, Runde has 55 students who volunteer to be in the "Ambassador" student liaison group for Positive Behavior Interventions and Support. The students make



From left: MSD Superintendent Briddell, IMMS Principal Tarnutzer, Ms. Runde and State Superintendent Evers.

videos, perform skits for assemblies, create bulletin boards, and facilitate "Mix It Up" day lunches to support the schoolwide behavior plan. She notes that schools have been at the forefront of education around differences and inclusiveness, which have had a positive effect on students, helping them feel more comfortable, less bullied, and better able to achieve at higher levels.

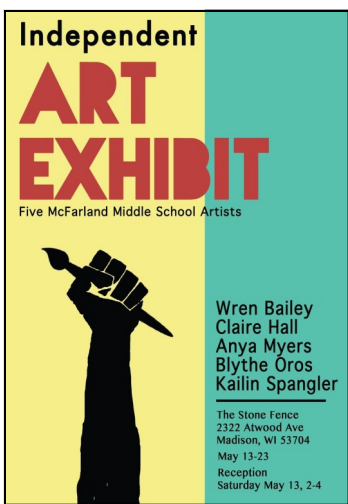
Runde hopes to improve access to mental health services through a partnership with local mental health professionals. "If we were able to have a mental health representative at our school, the barriers of getting counseling for families would be minimized," she said. "School

is a comfortable, familiar place that is less intimidating to families."

An e-mail from the parent of a former student, thanked Runde for her work. A former student wrote that "it is clear that she isn't simply performing a job, she is pursuing a passion and her purpose in life by helping others." The former student credits Runde's "approachability, accepting nature, and uncanny ability to see when a student is in need of help" as a distinct turning point in his life.

With a commitment to youth that extends beyond school into the community, Runde serves on the board of directors of the McFarland Youth Center and is a member of the Optimist Club. She volunteers at her church, with the "Shared Table" community supper program, and with the "Bowls for Hunger" fundraiser.

Runde began her school counseling career at McFarland High School in 2002. She moved to her current position at IMMS in 2007. She is a graduate of UW-Whitewater with a degree in business administration-marketing. She earned her master's degree in counseling education from the UW-Platteville.



Art on display

IMMS students Wren Bailey, Claire Hall, Anya Myers, Blythe Oros and Kailin Spangler, who are in Ms. Schoen's independent art class, held an exhibit of their projects from May 13-23 in Madison.



Photo by Forrest T. Waddell

Staff defends court

In the annual staff vs. student basketball game for 2017, the students charged back to take a late lead, but a last-minute basket gave the staff the win.

IMMS staff leads teacher walking competition

By Forrest T. Waddell

IMMS 8th Grade

If you have seen teachers taking laps around the halls or high stepping through announcements, the Step Challenge might be the cause. Instigator Mr. Marrese-Wheeler provides details on the competition.

Q: How did this competition start?

A: Initially, we began the Step Challenge at IMMS in Fall of 2015. Several of the staff, including myself, discovered we had joined the Fitbit craze. This allowed us to "friend" each other via the Fitbit app and in doing so, we began a fun, weekly Step Challenge called the Workweek Hustle. Over the 2015-2016 school year we challenged each other to see who could out walk the other. Mr. Peterson is a walking machine! So is Mrs. Miller! I have been known to walk a few steps as well. By the end of the school year, a few staff from the high school had joined us. We decided that it would be fun to challenge the

high school staff to a walking competition. As the 2016-2017 school year began, we set up the challenge. Staff from WIS and CE/MPS along with the District Office heard about our competition and wanted to join. I worked with Melissa Pfohl in the District Office to set up a Google Form spreadsheet. This January, with the start of the new year, we added other forms of exercise - yoga, running, biking, weight lifting, other forms of cardio exercise.

Q: What is the purpose?

A: The purpose of the Step Challenge is to promote the health and well being of our staff. The American Heart Association suggests people should walk at least 10,000 steps a day. That is around 5 miles! Some of our walkers average that amount. Others, like Misters Peterson or MDubs, average close to 25,000 steps a day. Ms. Murphy at WIS is always their biggest walker!

Q: Who's involved in it?

A: Any and all staff members from the McFarland schools can participate. We have had up to

80, but now seem to average around 40-45 each week. Teachers, support staff, and administrators are involved. IMMS has Mr. T., Mr. Jondle, Mr. Gennrich participating, too. IMMS actually has more staff participating than all the other schools.

Q: How would you describe the competition?

A: Each week, staff members keep track of their total number of steps beginning on a Monday morning through midnight on Friday. They then enter their name, their school, and the total number of steps. Over the weekend they can record their steps. We have it set up so that once you record your steps or number of minutes exercising, the Google Form tallies up everything, giving us the total number of steps and averages. We use the average number of steps and the number of staff participating to determine a winner. Of course, if one is participating and exercising, the person is a winner because it benefits his/her health!

Q: How is a winner chosen?



Mr. Marrese-Wheeler holds the S.W.E.L.L. trophy.

A: As I mentioned, we determine the building staff winners based on the total number of steps, the average (key determinant) and the number of staff who participated for that week. In addition to determining the winning building staff, we, on occasion, try to highlight staff who have improved or have the highest number of steps.

Q: What does the winner get?

A: Besides health benefits, the winning staff receives the S.W.E.L.L. trophy. Ms. Stokes had an old trophy she donated. Mr. Peterson gave us one of his daughter's little running shoes. Ms. Booth, an art teacher at the high school, and a student in her class, painted the shoe gold, then glued it to the top of the trophy. Thus we had a very beautiful trophy to present to the winning building staff. The trophy name means Spartans Walking Everywhere Living Life. Each week, I present it to the winning school. Ms. Bailey just loves having this trophy on her desk. Individuals who participate have their names entered into a drawing for prizes.

Q: Is there anything else we should know?

A: While I do not have the exact mileage, the McFarland staff has walked across America and back, several times! While the Step Challenge has been for our staff, it would be fun to find a way to open up a challenge between staff and students at IMMS. Students can challenge each other, too!