



The Paw Print

BCWMS

April 2021

The Show Will Go On for WMS Choirs

by GIANNA DESGRANGES

Over the last year, our school has endured many challenges. One of these challenges was *Seussical Jr.*, the musical planned for last year had been cancelled due to COVID-19. Although this was a hard decision last year, this year, the musical is back up and students are getting ready to perform!

Seussical Jr. is a production directed by choir teacher, Mrs. Ryskamp and is based on the *Seussical Musical*.

At the moment, rehearsals are underway, and the performances take place the weekend of May 8, with the first performance on May 8th.

There will be no present audience in the auditorium, except for the ensemble in the separate show.

See **MUSICAL**, pg. 2



WMS Students were celebrated on March 6th for the 2021 West Central Michigan Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. Go to page 5 to read more about the winning works.

Performances Start Again for WMS Band Program

by SKYLAR PRUITT

Band has been different in many ways this year. From playing outside, playing with masks, and playing to audiences, there have been some changes to the experience.

Addy Rutgers, a student who plays clarinet in Mr. Townsend's 8th grade band class says, "Band is different because we have to wear masks, and we can't sit so close to each other."

Allie Boruta who also is a student in Mr. Townsend's 8th grade band said, "We have to use instrument covers, which makes us not sound as good sometimes."

Other differences in Band include brass have to use puppy pads to absorb the water that they blow out of their instruments, and at concerts they have a max amount of people that can attend due to safety protocols.

During concerts this year, student performers have to follow certain rules to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. At the last band concert, some of these rules included only one family member was allowed to attend the concert with

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MUSICAL, Cont. pg. 1

The performance will be recorded in two performances, one for 7th grade, and one for 8th. The leads in the musical will stay the same with the other cast of characters changing between grades. When not performing, the other cast of students will be in the audience and others will be able to watch the recording of both performances.

Many students around the school are excited for the performance, including the cast.

After asking what to expect out of the performance this year, Michele Sanders who is in 8th grade, playing the lead role of the Cat in the Hat said, "I can definitely say that the choreography will be great to watch. Mrs. Vitarelli, our choreographer this year, has really got some awesome moves in store for us. Even though the musical might not have an audience, I'm positive that it will be just as cool as a live performance."

Even with changes to the musical to make sure it is safe and follows COVID-19 guidelines, the performance will be fantastic. With the help of the school, and our community, the joy of West Middle Schools Musical is something that everyone can look forward to this year.

**BAND, Cont. pg.1**

the student, instruments had covers on the opening to prevent spit from coming out, and social distancing was applied and followed.

Even with the changes, being able to perform this year allowed students to share what they have learned and it gave a chance for everyone to get to be a part of something we have been able to do in the past. Because there was a limit on the size of the crowd, some people who could not come in person were able to watch it on YouTube. Changing the size of the crowd does have an impact on the way it can feel to perform.

Mr. Townsend was asked what he thought was different about this performing this year and he said, "There are many different things, so it's hard to narrow it down. The size of the audience physically present has probably been the biggest difference. I'm so used to turning around from the students to the audience and seeing several hundred people sitting in the audience. So far, we've had one public performance this year, and we were allowed to have 100 people in the audience."

And yet despite all of this change, students enjoy being able to be in front of their family and other community members, showing what they can do as a group.

Addy Rutgers says, "I love playing in concerts because it shows our parents what we are capable of doing."

Allie Boruta who also plays clarinet adds, "It's still fun to play at concerts even with COVID-19."



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Teacher Feature:

Lego-loving Teacher Builds Fun Student Experiences



by SKYLAR PRUITT

At the end of the downstairs hallway, you will find a dedicated Math teacher named Mrs. Rose. Although she grew up in Clarkston, MI, which is on the east side of Michigan, she attended and graduated from Grand Valley State University on the west side of the state. “I’ve lived in Madison, Wisconsin for the past five years with my husband. My husband is a graduate of Byron Center Schools and grew up here,” she said.

“I have two younger siblings. My brother is graduating from Wayne State University this spring and my sister is a graduate student at University of California San Francisco studying Immunology,” she said.

Mrs. Rose teaches Math to eighth graders at WMS and she has been teaching for a total of six years, with this school year as her first at West.

Mrs. Rose loves Legos and *Star Wars*; when you walk into her classroom you will immediately notice the Legos everywhere and the *Star Wars* posters that line the back wall that make her classroom all the more fun and reflective of her personality. The biggest Lego set build she has completed is the *Star Wars* First Order Star Destroyer and her favorite character from *Star Wars* is Obi-wan Kenobi.

Mrs. Rose first became interested in teaching through camp. She said, “When I was a summer camp counselor. I taught kids arts and crafts like leatherworking, basket weaving, and photography.”

She shared the best thing about teaching middle school students is being able to get to know them and “seeing them grow as people and academically.”

When she is not teaching at WMS, she is hiking and spending time with her dog Lucy, her husband and her one-and-a-half-year-old son, Michael.



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Excerpts from Awarded Writings

by ADDISON RUTGERS

Silver Key, Short Story: Sunrise

“When we finished talking the moon was out and it was just a sliver so you could see all the stars. We went to a field where we used to play all the time when we were kids, we used to eat picnics here and we used to run around and tell each other all our secrets here. The most important thing is that only we knew about it. Now it was dark and peaceful. We sat down and laid there looking at the stars and remembering all the good times. It was around midnight when my mom called me and told me to get home. I said goodbye to August and then rode my bike home.

Around a month later my mom told me that she and her boyfriend were getting married. I was shocked but not as much as August was. We were spending a lot of time together at the ice cream shop and the field. A few weeks later I was getting ready for the wedding. This is the first time I will be seeing my step siblings. I was nervous...”

by TESS DEHAAN

Honorable Mention, Short Story: Disclosed Wall

“I flop down onto my bed with a groan. I flip on my side and glare at the wall that has been written on, drawn on, and cried on if I’m being completely honest. One glance into my room and my life would be destroyed. My room was officially off limits to anybody, my feelings were hard enough for me to know about, but other people? Not happening. I stare at the wall, thinking about everything I’ve written on that wall. My whole life is on that wall, from the meaningless scribbles on the wall to the messy paragraphs. I can’t feel anything as I curl up, hugging myself.

‘Why am I like this?’ I whisper to myself, my voice wobbling. I hear a creak. I shoot up and sprint to the door but it’s too late.

‘Mom get out.’ I command in a voice that I wish was cold, but it trembles as I watch my mom’s eyes flit from me to the exposed wall. She’s already reading, her eyes follow the lines of writing. Her eyes wander off, but they began to trail across the writing again. They become glossy quickly as she reads further in. I close my eyes tight and feel a tear squeeze out. The possibilities of what she’s thinking about me run through my mind...”

by EMMA WIECHERTJES

Silver Key, Short Story: Stop and Smell the Roses

“I grumbled under my breath while taking the long, steep hike up the mountain. Sure, the trees in all their green glory were beautiful, but man was the slope precipitous.

‘Are we almost there yet?’ I called up to my dark-haired mother. Her hazel eyes flashed back at me, contrasting her soft features. People always said we looked alike, with the way our hair curled and the toothy smile, but I could never see it.

‘Are you kidding? Sadie, we’ve barely left the flat part of the island.’ I groaned, not caring if she heard me. Mom had been the one to want to go on this vacation, anyways.

Apparently, she had always wanted to visit the Great Barrier Reef, ever since college. She had researched a lot about this Whitsunday Island that is right on the reef, with the most beautiful beach, Whitehaven Beach. Once Mom gets an idea in her head, she goes with it. That’s another thing people say we have in common...”

by KYLIE SHELDON

Silver Key, Short Story: Rewind

“October is filled with many scares; one includes my two normal (well as normal as they are) siblings and I just trick-or-treating. My siblings were in costume of course and we were walking along a sidewalk at about 9:30 heading home. The one street light was flickering on and off.

Now I knew not to go to List Street on any day of the year especially not Halloween. The one house was said to be owned by an old man but no one had seen him since the year he moved in. My siblings, Damion, and Maddy however, did not know for the kids at their schools never talked about it. My siblings ran up while I looked at a text from mom asking us to be home soon and they (being very bright(not)) decided to knock on the door slowly not waiting for me. As the door opened, I ran up so they weren't alone...”

You can learn more about how to enter your art or writing into the Scholastic Awards at www.artandwriting.org.

2021 WMS Art and Writing Winners

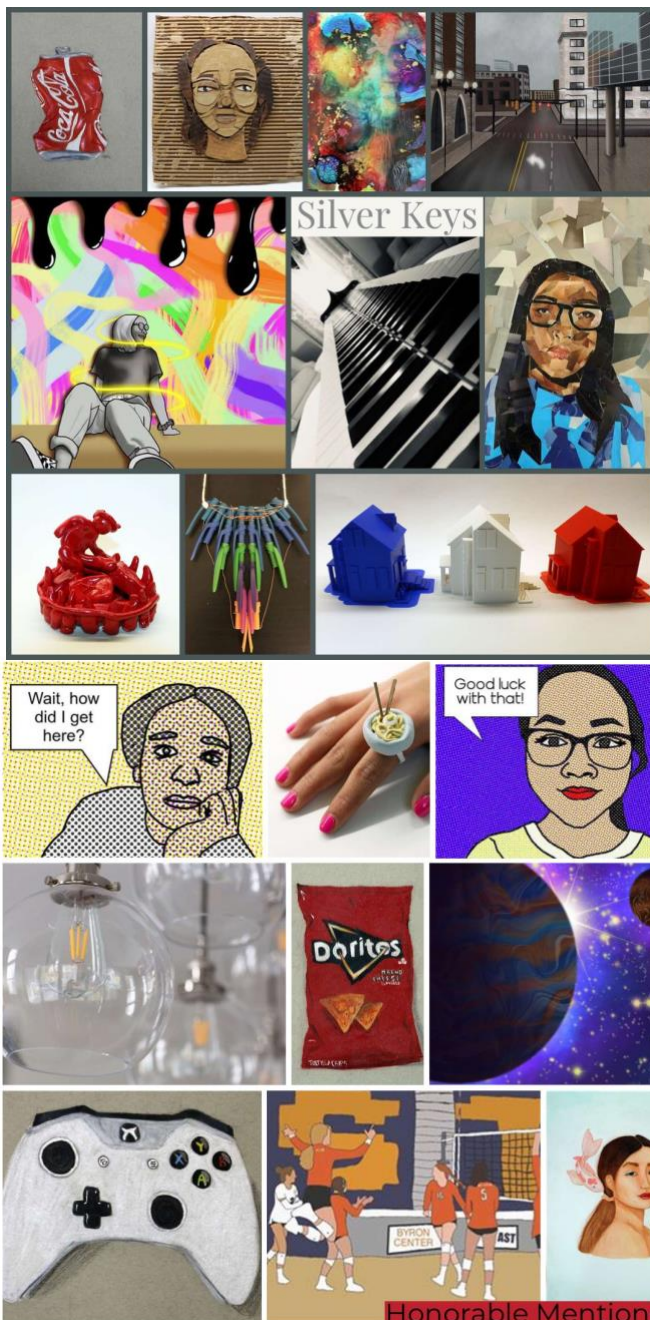
Congratulations to the following 7th and 8th grade students who received recognition at the 2021 West Central Michigan Scholastic Art and Writing Awards:

- Maddie Bastic: Honorable Mention in Photography
- Austin Coleman: Silver Key in Sculpture
- Tess DeHaan: Honorable Mention in Short Story
- Diana Esparza-Salvador: Gold Key in Drawing & Illustration
- Sophia Feldpausch: Gold Key in Drawing & Illustration
- Addison Foote: Silver Key in Mixed Media
- Lillian Gould: Honorable Mention in Digital Art
- Justin Khuu: Silver Key in Photography
- Sydney Law: Honorable Mention in Film & Animation
- Alyssa Le: Honorable Mention in Painting
- Ashlee Meekhof: Silver Key and Two Honorable Mentions in Drawing & Illustration
- Leah Myhre: Two Silver Keys and an Honorable Mention in Digital Art
- Helena Nguyen: Silver Key in Mixed Media and Honorable Mention in Digital Art
- Jocelyn Pham: Honorable Mention in Jewelry
- Addison Rutgers: Silver Key in Short Story
- Triston Rutgers: Silver Key in Jewelry
- Kylie Sheldon: Silver Key in Short Story
- Izzy Smith: Silver Key in Drawing & Illustration
- London Turner: Silver Key in Sculpture and Honorable Mention in Digital Art
- Emma Wiechertjes: Silver Key in Short Story

Gold Key Winner's Diana and Sophia's artwork will be moved onto National Competition and all works were celebrated in a virtual event March 6th.



Above: Gold Key Winning work by Diana Esparza-Salvador and Sophia Feldpausch



Honorable Mentions

Movie Review:

Wonder Woman Sequel Delivers Fun and Excitement

by ALLYSON LaBEAN

Do you remember the *Wonder Woman* movie that came out in 2017? Well, because that *Wonder Woman* movie did so well, they made a second one, and believe it or not *Wonder Woman 1984*, rated PG-13 is the new movie! *Wonder Woman 1984* is an Action-Adventure, Drama, Superhero and Fantasy film all in one.

In some cases, there are mixed reviews on the movie, but my mother and I went to see it in the movie theater and let me just say those bad reviews on it are wrong. We both loved it.

The movie was so eventful! The movie has lots of action and surprises waiting to pop out at you when you least expect it.

Wonder Woman 1984 will take you by surprise!

The actress who plays Wonder Woman is Gal Gadot, who also played the character in the first film. *Wonder Woman 1984* is basically decades in the future from the last movie and Wonder Woman is now working as an archivist in Washington, D.C.

The problem starts when all of a sudden, a shipment of new items she needs to look at, she comes across a very old crystal. The crystal looks harmless but the thing is anything that looks harmless can actually be extremely dangerous.

If I had to put a rating from zero stars to five stars, I would give it a 4 ½. If you want to go see a movie but don't know which one to pick then you should pick see *Wonder Woman 1984*. You will not be disappointed.

Game Review:

Crossings Offer Instant Vacation

by GIANNA DESGRANGES

This year, we all must agree; we needed a vacation. From tossing and turning with schedules, to piles upon piles of homework - even teachers experienced a struggle, with new online classes to grading virtual assignments. With all of our need to get away, there is one solution. *Animal Crossing: New Horizons!*

Released March 20, 2020, *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*, is a game on Nintendo Switch. The game takes place on a deserted island and you get to explore and create a customized world in this place.

With a customized character, explore the inhabited island, from deep-sea diving to harvesting fruit. With everything you could imagine, your personalized island has endless possibilities!

The only limit is your imagination. Friendly villagers and other friends can also help you along the way to turn your island into a tropical paradise!

Using only your resources, you can explore your own island and far away islands, and make new friends as you play.

Who needs a vacation if you have *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*?

Book Review:

Character Connection is Easy in this Summer Read

by MACILYNN SHAFFER

With ever changing schedules and some canceled events, many students are finding themselves with a lot of free time.

One great way to fill this time is by reading. *Hot Dog Girl* by Jennifer Dugan is a great read that I highly recommend.

Elouise Parker, a teen from a small town in the middle of nowhere, is determined to have the best, most carefree summer of her life. Unfortunately for her, a few things stand in her way.

When her crush, a boy named Nick, catches the attention of her enemy, she realizes what she truly wants from the summer. As Elouise carries the reader through her train wreck of a summer, every up and down through the novel is felt because of the connection to the character.

Rated at a solid 3.5 stars on Goodreads, this laugh-out-loud novel will leave readers wanting more as they experience the everyday occurrences of young Elouise Parker.

COVID Changing Schedules is a Struggle

by PARKER DeWYSE

This year has been a whirlwind of changes and adapting to new things thanks to the Coronavirus pandemic. One big change that we've been going back and forth with is school schedules. We've gone through hybrid learning, remote learning, and in-person learning.

Personally, I feel that switching between these schedules is very draining. On the remote days, I prefer to sleep in but I have to wake up earlier when I have to go to in person school. Having to change my alarm every day was very bothersome.

An article called "Sleep and Mood" written by the Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School in 2008 said that some studies have proven that just partial sleep deprivation can have a large effect on your mood. Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania said that subjects who only got 4.5 hours of sleep became more stressed, angry, and irritable.

Using this, I can say that when we go between remote learning and in person learning, it can change our sleep patterns. That can cause kids to be more tired and stressed than they would be. "What we've shown is that these effects build up incrementally over childhood, so that children who always had irregular

bedtimes were worse off than those children who did have a regular bedtime at one or two of the ages when they were surveyed," says Professor Yvonne Kelly ("Go to bed! Irregular bedtimes linked to behavioral problems in children"). This makes me believe that switching between 2 very different schedules is hard to maintain.

Also, it's hard to keep track of items that are given to us at school. While trying to get onto Zooms on time and having the correct items for them, it's hard to keep the items we need for a specific class where they need to be. Additionally, if those items are needed back at school, that makes the job more difficult because it adds more pressure to keep track of them.

One other problem with switching between these schedules is that friends get separated into two different groups, making it harder to get through the day. Personally, being able to socialize is one of the most enjoyable things about school, especially with the hard year we're going through. Except when I get to see them one week and then the next week I don't get to see them at all, it doesn't make this pandemic any easier. This is why I believe that switching between schedules doesn't improve the current situation we're in, it only dampens the mood.

Plan Your Own Fun for Break

by DIANA ESPARZA

Spring Break is a great time to have fun and take a long-deserved break from school. There are various activities that are fun to do without having to travel anywhere that could keep us safe due to COVID-19.

To continue, some of these activities include visiting wide-open spaces such as the beach where you could have a space to relax while hearing the waves crashing and building sandcastles. Lake Michigan is only about 35 minutes away!

Another fun idea is trying to learn something new, for example, making desserts or just learning how to cook a new recipe. Furthermore, you could plan small activities. For instance, stargazing, having a family picnic with all your favorite snacks, and just talking and playing around on the grass, and even just having a day for yourself where you wouldn't have to worry about anything can be fun during vacation.

To add on, if you like to stay active you could go hiking, biking, and just playing all kinds of sports to keep you healthy and in shape. These are some great examples of how you could make a memorable Spring Break.

How are you planning to spend your Spring Break?

Spring Break Checklist:

- **Go to the Beach**
- **Read a Book**
- **Learn a New Skill**
- **Ride a Bike**
- **Go for a Walk**
- **Eat Ice Cream**
- **Sleep In**
- **Talk with Friends**
- **Play a Game**
- **Watch a Movie**



Basketball Varied Between Winter Seasons

By MERCEDEZ THOMPSON & DIANA ESPARZA

Due to the pandemic, basketball at WMS this year has been different than in previous years. Athletes have to wear masks while playing and players cannot congratulate teammates with high fives.

Trying to play a sport that can have contact and is indoors, while also following safety protocols and guidelines is also a new side to this sport. Basketball is divided into Winter I season for boys and Winter II season for girls. Because of added restrictions during the Winter I season which was before Winter Break, the boys' basketball teams at WMS were only able to play two real games during the season. The girls' basketball team had a more normal schedule because their season took place after Winter Break.

For both teams, many practices went like this: warm up, shooting drills (like layups, free throws, and more), followed by scrimmages to help the athletes prepare for the real game. A scrimmage also helps practice plays against their teammates.

Even though the boys' teams were not able to finish their season, they still had fun.



When asked what his favorite thing about basketball is, 8th grader Landon Tungate said, "It's a competition where I can help my team go out and win."

7th grader Tate Bainbridge said the best part of the season was being able to have fun with friends during practices and games even with the changes of not being able to high five and also having to wear masks when they play.

The girls who played also had a lot of fun building basketball skills and also making friends.

For 8th grader Maddie Foncesbeck, the focus of fun is also on the team.

"Some of my favorite memories were made on the bus. I love to have fun with my teammates while we get focused for the game," she said.

Seasons would not have been so different this year if there hadn't been a pandemic. One the bright side, students who were on the team still got to experience many wonderful things like scoring their first basket of the game, playing with friends, and simply playing games that the team had initially prepared for.

Even if some only got to play in a couple of games, it was better than nothing.