

February 2008 New Milford High School Monthly Report

Compiled by Eric Sheninger

1. Observations

<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Observed by</u>
Kerri Hubbard	S.A.C.	1/23/08	1	Eric Sheninger
John Coviello	History	1/29/08	7	Eric Sheninger
Nicola Schneider	Spec. Ed.	1/29/08	1	Eric Sheninger
Dana Buzzelli	Spec. Ed.	2/6/07	8	Eric Sheninger
Wendy Mackey	Spec. Ed.	2/7/08	6	Eric Sheninger
Mike Coyne	Spec. Ed.	2/8/08	1	Eric Sheninger
Basheba Mitchell	Spec. Ed.	2/21/08	8	Eric Sheninger
Olivia Burten	Algebra 1A	1/22/08	7	Jerry Perrone
Keith Devereaux	Biology	2/13/08	3	Jerry Perrone
Susan Michels	English	2/21/08	7	Lou Manuppelli
Karen Vicari	Business	2/20/08	6	Lou Manuppelli

Summaries:

2. Guest lecturers

- Leslie Hafner (Rebecca Atieh's mother-ESL Teacher) spoke to students regarding her experiences doing missionary work in Rwanda. Through images, Mrs. Hafner gave a detailed account of the historical and human implications of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. She gave the students a rare opportunity to understand how her work as a nurse is attempting to provide better medical care for the citizens of Rwanda. She explicitly described for the students the nature of the genocide, its current effects on Rwandan society and the lack of education, food, medical care and societal infrastructure in Rwanda today. She will be returning to Rwanda in early March to spend time working in a local hospital and bringing supplies to missionaries who work with orphaned children. The students in the Holocaust class, Peer Leadership, Humanities, Early Childhood Development, Student Council and the Winter Cheerleading squad have organized a service effort to provide items for the children requested by Mrs. Hafner. The students, under the direction of Mrs. Beiner, will be making children's hand puppets as well as hand sewn shorts and shirts for the school children. Students will be working after school on 2/12/08 to create these items to be sent with Mrs. Hafner for her early March return to Rwanda. In April, Mrs. Hafner will return to New Milford to speak to the students about her March visit as well as offer our students additional ways in which they can help provide relief to a nation still struggling with the effects of genocide. 100 students attended this presentation and are steadfastly committed to finding ways to help.

3. Innovations:

- Ms. Burten's History 2 class re-enacted the trench warfare battles as they studied World War I. Many veterans of past wars were in attendance!
- A group of 15 eager and enthusiastic high school students gathered for the first time on Feb. 13 in Mrs. DePoto's classroom after school to learn about the new Future Educators Club at New Milford High School. Driven by a workshop attended by Mrs. DePoto in January at the College of New Jersey sponsored by the State Department of Education and TCNJ to address the issue of teacher recruitment, the newly-formed club will sponsor activities designed to expose high school students to the teaching profession. These activities will include assistantships to teachers and shadowing of teachers in the other schools in the district. In late June Mrs. DePoto will attend a 3 day workshop at TCNJ that will provide

the framework for a possible elective course offered in 2009 to juniors and seniors at the high school in teacher education. Mrs. Tambuscio is co-advisor with Mrs. DePoto and brings her extensive teaching experience with special needs students to the program and to the list of possible activities for the club. Together, both teachers hope to attract the “best and the brightest” to a profession they both are committed to and passionate about.

- The *Opening Knights*, NMHS’ new extra-curricular Drama Club undertook its first-ever benefit performance on February 1, 2008, and, despite the icy weather, it was a well-attended and rousing success. A comedy cabaret entitled, “Everything You Know Is Wrong” was performed in the cafeteria, which was transformed into an intimate *boite* for the evening due to the prodigious efforts of the Stage Crew and other club members, with the extreme able and diligent assistance of parents including Mr. and Mrs. Milne and Mr. and Mrs. Kaprielian. (Special thanks to Mr. Milne for the loan of vital lighting and electrical equipment.) Junior Justin Munier provided and operated his own sound system as well. The show was co-directed by Senior Michael Kusnir and Junior Sean Walsh and comprised a variety of songs and skits, taking on a variety of targets. One item, “I Will Survive”, which kidded the midterm exams and written (complete with parody lyrics) and choreographed by Senior Vanessa Rappa, took the bold step of ribbing Mr. Sheninger in his presence. Mr. Sheninger and his wife were in attendance, as were our new superintendent, Mr. Nicholas Brown and our Board of Education president, Mr. Dan Connor. NMHS can expect more such student-driven events from our new Drama Club in months and years to come.
- The NMHS Environmental Club is participating in the Earth Foundation’s Adopt an Acre campaign to conserve and protect rainforest acres in the Osa Peninsula of Costa Rica. In conjunction with the Nature Conservancy, the Earth Foundation runs a T-shirt sale featuring colorful animals that highlight the fact that critical habitats are vanishing all around the globe. For every 10 T-shirts sold, the organization raises enough money to purchase one acre of rainforest. Environmental Club members sold T-shirts to family and friends and also held lunchtime sales in February. Their dedication was rewarded; so far, the New Milford community has saved nearly six acres of rainforest!
- Ms. Smith’s Marine Biology class completed a comprehensive project for their final exam grade. The project was in two parts: Part A was completed totally in class on the school laptops over a 4 week period. The Project was in the format of a Report or PowerPoint presentation. It was to include the following:
 - 1) Explain and follow the lives of 3 marine species, their interdependence on each other, any environmental impact such as humans, global warming.
 - 2) Each species should have a label diagram of species and explain each of their function.
 - 3) Where do they fit in the food chain, what type of food do they eat.
 - 4) Classification – Family, Order, Species, Phylum, etc.
 - 5) At least 2 current articles per species – survival, any discoveries, etc.
 - 6) Intermixed with the appropriate graphics and references
 - 7) Pick 2 vegetation and link them back to each marine species chosen (Habitat, protection, food source, etc).
 - 8) Reflection: - What did they learn throughout the course, something new or how their views have changed after completing this assignment/Marine Biology course.Part B of this assignment could be done as a PowerPoint presentation or as a Video clip. Students were to design an advertisement to appeal to the general public “Why we should go Green” The students had total creative control. The video or PowerPoint presentation should use or imply the following vocabulary words: a) Endangered Species b) Extinction c) Conservation d) Global warming e) Solutions to the Problems f) “Going Green” g) Information clips from 2 IMAX films viewed back in December.

4. Student honors:

- New Milford High School has nominated four juniors to the 2008 New Jersey Governor's School Program. The Nominees and their respective schools are as follows:
 - Angela Wan – School on the Environment
 - Sean Walsh – School of Public Issues and the Future of New Jersey
 - Kinjal DeSai – School in the Sciences
 - Judy Koo – School of the Arts – Visual Arts – PaintingThe State of New Jersey will select 100 scholars for each of the Governor's Schools by April 1, 2008.
- Junior band member *Michele Franco* went out of her way to contact a composer from one of her favorite childhood pieces. She contacted *Jim Lang*- composer of the "*Hey Arnold*" TV series for some of his music that is not in print or commercially available. She somehow convinced him to send some copies and soon she got an email with the files attached! The high school band is currently working on an arrangement as an experiment to try the music.
- Students in the Holocaust course will have the opportunity to hear three major speakers on Darfur at Kean University on February 15, 2008.
 - * **Nicholas Kristoff**, a two time Pulitzer Price winner, writes op-ed columns that appear twice each week in *The New York Times*. In 2006, Kristoff won his second Pulitzer Price for commentary on his graphic, deeply reported columns on the current genocide in Darfur - he gave voice to the voiceless in the Darfur.
 - * **Harry Reicher**, a University of Pennsylvania legal scholar who has written a great deal on the legal implications of genocide.
 - * **Jerry Ehrlich** - founder of Doctors Without Borders, a relief organization that provides aid worldwide.As a result of the school's efforts in Holocaust/genocide education, two of our students have been invited to a private reception with Nicholas Kristoff. Michael Kontomanolis and Stephen Zipp have been heading an effort in our school to raise funds for Darfur. They will both be in attendance at this private reception immediately following Kristoff's keynote address. Michael and Stephen are the only two students invited to this reception which is being hosted by the President of Kean University, Dr. Farahi.
- Students in Peer Leadership had the opportunity to attend the annual Elk Peer Leadership Conference on February 8 - 10, 2008 at the Hyatt, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Ten students were sponsored by the New Milford/Teaneck Elks at \$345.00 per person. Each year the Elks affords our students this amazing leadership opportunity. 550 students from around the state attend this conference that hosts some of the nation's best speakers on drug and alcohol prevention.
- On Saturday February 8, 2008 four members of the Chorus performed as part of the 2008 North Region 1 Chorus. The concert was at 4PM at Secaucus High School. They are Melissa Milne, Jonell Robles, Azela Zarate, and Hannah Faye Zarate. Mrs. Swartz spent the day as a moderator for the final rehearsal on Saturday, Mrs. Milne graciously drove the students back and forth to Morris Knowles High School in Rockaway for all the after school rehearsals.
- Jessica Marciano and Hannah Faye Zarate's preparation for their college audition for the music department of their selected colleges finally took place this month. They both performed exceptionally. Jonell Robles graciously went with Hannah to the college and accompanied her on piano.
- On January 25th Mrs. Bettini took Angenille Barredo, Jennifer Monticillo and Christian Hincapie to the Korean Artist Exhibition. Judy Koo's reception was held at Bergen Pac in their gallery at 30 Van Brunt Street Englewood, N.J. She was one of seven artists on Exhibition.

- Dr. Asa-Awuku nominated the following students for the National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine: Yuhanin Akbulut, Arti Desai, Merlyn Jacob, Jonathan Silva, Kinjal Desai, Angela Wan, Steven Davidson, and Robert Dobos.
- Dr. Asa-Awuku nominated for the National Young Leaders Conference: Yuhanin Akbulut, David Gongon, Alanna Blocklin, Alex Bridge, Steven Conner, Steven Davidson, Robert Dobos, Meryl Matthew, Katie Scimeca, Tracy Vargas

5. Field trips

- On Valentine's Day the Choral Ensemble entertained at the New Milford Senior Center. Solos, duets and ensemble pieces saluting the day were performed. A special piece "Once in love with Peggy" and a sing-along was the highlight of the afternoon. The Senior Citizens graciously gave the students a standing ovation which left a wide smile on all that were present.
- The Opening Knights took their first field trip to a theatrical production. Seventeen students, accompanied by Mr. Lockhart, Mr. Coviello, and Miss Lyons, attended an evening performance of *The Miracle Worker* at Paper Mill Play House. The students thoroughly enjoyed the rich themes and depth of this production and are looking forward to attending Paper Mill's production of Little Shop of Horrors in June.
- On February 7th close to 70 Spanish 2 students enjoyed a field trip which was planned by Mrs. Basheba Mitchell. In honor of Dominican Independence Day (February 27th), the Hostos Center for the Arts and Culture in the Bronx sponsored "A Dominican Celebration with Jose Torres y su guaguanco callejero". Students experienced the richness of Dominican culture through its music. The rhythms of the salsa, merengue and bachata had all the students literally "dancing in their seats"! A Dominican luncheon followed in Washington Heights at the Jubilee Restaurant. Students listened to Dominican music in the background as they feasted on "empanadas", salad, chicken with rice and beans, and "maduros" (cooked plantains). And, a favorite dessert was also served: FLAN, a velvety custard treat!

6. Professional Development

- Ms. Atieh (ESL teacher) attended a workshop entitled "Using iPods to Enhance English Language Acquisition". Using iPods in the classroom not only enhances instruction but also increases motivation. There are many uses for the iPod in schools. However, there are four main ways to apply their use in a school setting. These include: music/lyrics, audio books, voice recorders and Pod Casting. These four uses focus students on reading, writing, listening and speaking. Students can listen to music and read the lyrics to a song to help them understand grammar, vocabulary and even repetition. Using an iPod, a student can listen to a story on tape that they are reading in class. In many cases this auditory learning helps students with reading comprehension. The voice recorder allows students to record their thoughts instantly and continue on with their assignments. If a teacher utilizes iWriter, the teacher can write questions or notes on the iPod for the students to use on a field trip. Finally, Pod Casting allows the students to create presentations that can be viewed by all. Students can also view Pod Casts on the internet that can be downloaded and used as an educational tool in the classroom. This is just a small part of the many ways in which iPods can be utilized in the classrooms and schools. It reaches various learning styles and students from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. It creates an environment that is not only educational but also fun.
- Ms. Grompone and Ms. Lyons went to South Brunswick High School on 1/18/08 to see how IPODS were being implemented in the foreign language curriculum to improve communication among students in the target language. They were able to meet with the World Language Supervisor, as well as two Spanish teachers at the High School. They

observed the IPODS being used in a Spanish IV Honors course as well as a Spanish V AP course.

7. Facilities

- The HS just purchased all of the components for a mobile World Language/ESL lab. The lab will consist of 26 IPOD 4 GB Nanos (3rd Generation), 26 XtremMac Digital Recording devices, and a MAC laptop. All of these components will be housed in a lockable Bretford PowerSnyc Cart. This innovative cart will organize, update, charge, and transport the IPOD lab to any room in the building.

8. Guidance

- The Guidance Department has welcomed a new intern, Melanie Siliato, for the remainder of the 2007-2008 school year. Melanie is currently pursuing her master's degree in school counseling at Montclair State University where she will graduate in the fall of 2008. She has been a graduate assistant in the Family and Child Studies Department at the university for the past two years. In addition, she is a substitute teacher in the New Milford School District and a tutor at Sylvan Learning Center.
- The High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) will be administered to all 11th grade students on March 4th, 5th, and 6th 2008. Students will be tested in Math and Language Arts. Passing the HSPA is a graduation requirement for all high school students in the state of New Jersey.
- On Friday, April 11th the Guidance Department will be hosting a Career Day for 11th grade students. This is a great opportunity for juniors to learn more about careers they have an interest in and gather information that may help them decide on a college major. If a parent would like to present on their career, please contact Mrs. Massar ASAP at 262-0172, ext. 2011.
- The Guidance Department will be hosting exciting evening programs throughout the spring. Included will be a SAT information night and college information nights for 11th and 12th grade parents. Look for dates and times in upcoming guidance newsletters.

9. Other

- The boys bowling team is once again having a season to remember. The team was first crowned County Group Champions and then BCSL Olympic League Champions. On Saturday (2/9), they won their 3rd consecutive Group I - NJSIAA Sectional Championship. Senior Chris Tacoma achieved the honor of bowling the high series and has qualified for the NJSIAA Individual Championships at the Carolier Lanes in New Brunswick on February 12. In addition, the team will compete in the NJSIAA State Team Tournament on February 18th at the Carolier Lanes.
- The Boys Basketball team qualified for the NJSIAA tournament as the #9 seed and will play at Leonia on 2/26 at 7:00pm. The Girls Basketball team also qualified as the #5 seed for the NJSIAA Tournament and will travel to play at Boonton on 2/28 at 7:00 PM.
- Head girls basketball coach, Mike Alfonso, reached the 100 career coaching win ranks on January 29th in front of a home crowd versus Emerson.
- The 3rd Annual Mike Pevny Benefit Basketball game was once again a big success. There was an impressive student turnout to show their enthusiasm and support this past Friday (2/8). Over \$880 was raised for the NM Scholarship Fund in Mike's name.
- The Athletic Boosters once again organized an outstanding evening by hosting a Beefsteak/Comedy Night at the New Milford Athletic Club on February 9th. The enormous turnout will be a big assist in continuing to provide scholarships for our student-athletes.
- On February 6th, the NJSIAA officially appointed Hawthorne Christian and Saddle River Day to the BCSL Olympic/National Division, effective the fall 2008-2009 season.

- In late January, a letter was sent to all retired staff, alumni, and parents concerning a new fundraiser for the high school theatre program called the Drama Donor Awards. The following excerpt from the letter explains it: *“We know that many of you have fond memories of New Milford High School’s musicals which originated in the 1970’s with such productions as **Only for Lovers, Pajama Game, and Grease.** Some of you may have acted in these shows or served as an advisor to them, or been a vital part of the stage crew....This year we are asking for support to develop our program....we are planning to initiate a **Drama Donor Award** which will continue the fine tradition we have so enjoyed. A permanent plaque listing **Bronze, Silver, and Gold** donors will be placed next to the James Africano Auditorium doors in the Main Lobby of the High School with the names of donors who have contributed \$300 (**Bronze**), \$400(**Silver**), and \$500 or more (**Gold**) to the program. **Friends of the Musical Theatre Program** contributing \$100-\$300 will be listed, along with the **Drama Donors**, on the back page of our program booklet, as well as announced at the beginning of each show....Once again, we thank you for your continual support and interest in the fine theatrical and musical offerings available at New Milford High School, and we look forward to seeing you at our production of **Thoroughly Modern Millie** this year!”* We are happy to report that the response has exceeded our expectations, yielding approximately \$3000 thus far. It seems that the tradition of excellent musical theatre at New Milford High School continues to strike a chord with both past and present participants. Their support of the program continues to inspire us and guarantees that this vital program will remain one of the best artistic endeavors in the district.
- A questionnaire was sent to middle school students In January to gauge future interest in the NM Ice Hockey Program. Nineteen students expressed a possible interest in finding out more about the program. The parents and students were invited to meet the coaching staff on January 30th to hear about what the program has to offer and express any questions or concerns. Five of the nineteen expressing interest attended.
- March is youth art month. The high school art department will have drawings and paintings on exhibition the first week in March in the New Milford public library.
- The cast and stage crew of this Spring’s musical has been “thoroughly” excited to be working on the set builds currently taking place this month. Over thirty students have participated so far this month with a myriad of parents and professional builders. Mr. Conner, Mr. Africano, Mr. Barton, and Mr. Smith (to name just a few) have returned this year to lead the build team to create a truly unique and captivating set for our students.
- The Principal's Office is pleased to have taken on an intern, Stephen Quinn, for this Spring Semester. Stephen is currently finishing his Master's Degree Program in Education Leadership, Management, & Policy at Seton Hall University. Steve is currently employed at St. Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, New York as Associate Director of Admissions, where he has helped a number of New Milford High School students matriculate into St. Thomas. He is already working on a number of projects for New Milford High School, including; implementing an online discipline referral system, working with St. Thomas Aquinas to provide college credits for upper level courses taken at New Milford High School, observing discipline cases, among others.
- On Thursday, February 14, the French students from the high school presented a program to the eighth grade to acquaint them with French. Students gave statistics about the importance of the French language (French is spoken on 5 continents, in 43 countries by over 300 million people). They presented skits in French and presented songs from our bilingual version of Les Miserables.