

February 2009 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>
Dorene Zacher	S.A.C.	2/9	4	Eric Sheninger
Nicola Schneider	English	2/10	2	Eric Sheninger
Wendy Mackey	English	2/11	5	Eric Sheninger
Dana Buzzelli	English	2/13	4	Eric Sheninger

Summaries:

2. Guest lecturers

- On February 20th The Art Institute of New York gave a presentation to Mrs. Bettini's art students. The students were shown career opportunities in Fashion Design, Graphic Design, Interior Design, Video Production, Web Design, Interactive Media, and Culinary Arts.

3. Innovations:

- On Friday, February 13th, Mr. Sheninger and Mr. Gouraige (Social Studies teacher, Administrative intern) invited all members of student government to a breakfast in the library. The purpose of this gathering was to encourage the students to be positive change agents, and take more ownership of the high school by bringing innovative ideas to the administration that they would like to see implemented. This will be a mutual effort to build a cooperative community between the student body and the high school's administration. In addition, through conversation between Mr. Wilson (Social Studies Department Chair and Senior Class Advisor) and the school's administrators, it was suggested that the school's administration will work to facilitate greater inclusion of the student body in the decision making process relevant to the students' high school experience. It was decided to hold monthly meetings moving forward where the students would bring actual ideas to be discussed.
- The Class of 2012 Seminar will be held on March 26th, 2009. The seminar classes are being conducted by experts in various fields. High Focus Treatment Center located in Paramus, New Jersey will discuss the negative repercussions of adolescent substance abuse with forty-five students who registered for this seminar. The Bergen County Sheriffs Gang Task Force Unit will discuss the trends and the violent lifestyle with twenty-one students. Paula Daloisio from New Milford High School will be conducting a "Developing a Sense of Trust" workshop with forty-two students. Professor Kim Samowski from Bergen County Community College will be discussing Effective Study Skills with forty-five students. The Center is sending a representative to discuss with fifteen young women, Understanding Your Bodies, and I will be conducting a seminar on Multi-culturist and Racial Diversity with nineteen students.
- Reading journals and other incidental writing in Mr. Lockhart's English classes are going to be done 21st century-style, via individual weblogs, or "blogs." Students create their own web pages and post blog entries. Mr. Lockhart is able to rapidly read and monitor all the student blogs and be notified when any entry occurs. This permits students to journal at their leisure whenever they are at a computer at any location. Not only does this save time and paper, but it takes advantage of students' pre-existing proclivity to network and communicate online. In weeks to come, our classes will be exploring collaborating on pages to create wikis, especially useful for topics which are

information-dense or which may require special explanations, background or historical perspective.

4. Student honors:

- Mrs. Bettini is pleased to announce that Judy Koo's art portfolio has been awarded an Honorable Mention Award in the Northern N.J. Regional Scholastics Art and Writing Awards. She was also given Gold Key Awards for two mixed media pieces. Abby Talla was also awarded an Honorable Mention Award for her painting "Runaway Suitcase". Jacob Ramos received honorable mention for his mixed media art. A jury of professional artists, curators, and arts educators spent fifteen hours reviewing over 1000 works of art submitted by over 700 individual students from across northern New Jersey. They were honored for their achievements at a special awards ceremony, which included a slide show and reception, at the Montclair Art Museum on February 12th.
- 2008 graduate Christian Hincapié was awarded a full tuition scholarship to The School of Art of The Cooper Union in the amount of \$130,000 for four years of study.
- Two sophomore band students, Nick Novak and Shannon Mulles are student recipients of the NJEA Music and Arts Award sponsored by the *Trenton Thunder* Minor League Baseball Team. They met the qualifications and were nominated by Mr. Andolino. The event takes place prior to the game on Tuesday April 14th, 2009.
- Cablevision/News 12's "The Challenge" featuring New Milford HS aired on February 21st and 22nd. NMHS prevailed over Waldwick and the Challenge team of seniors Kinjal Desai, Trisha Javaluyas, Angela Wan, and Kristi Saporito, and junior Filip Piasevoli will face off against the Bergen Academies at NEP Studios in NYC on Monday March 2nd. For more information on the competition visit <http://www.powertolearn.com/challenge/>.
- February is **Celebrate and Appreciate your Fellow Classmate Month** and a competition called "The Fairest of Them All" was organized by Ms. Zacher and Ms. Siliato. The purpose of this program was to recognize a student at New Milford High School who redefined the true meaning of excellence. This individual must be viewed by his/her peers as someone who maintains a positive self esteem, confidence from within and acts as a source of inspiration. Dorene Zacher and Melanie Siliato are pleased to announce that the winner is Kenny Van Sanders.
- Mrs. Keesing is thrilled to report that Brandon Foo, a freshman in Mrs. DePoto's English Honors class, has won an Honorable Mention award in the Letters About Literature contest! Amanda Howell, a freshman in Ms. Schlamp's English Honors class, made it through to the third round of the contest. Both of these students deserve our congratulations. As mentioned in an earlier Principal's Report this school year, the Letters About Literature contest is co-sponsored by the Library of Congress and Target Department Stores. Mrs. Keesing made freshman English teachers aware of the contest, and she worked with the entire 9th grade English classes to encourage participation. Contestants submitted original letters written to authors of independent-reading books that had a profound impact on them. Guidelines stressed the need for contestants to explore and share feelings and connections that they experienced from reading their books. Letters About Literature received 54,000 letters (including all three levels of the competition) this year from readers across the country. Of these, the national team of judges eliminated 49,000 in the first two rounds of assessment. New Jersey sent in over 2100 entries this year to the Library of Congress. The first and second rounds of judging are done at the national level. They then returned about 200 letters to New Jersey. A third round of judging reduced the numbers to about seventy-five. The judges met for the fourth round of judging and chose first place winners for all three levels and second place winners for Levels 2 and 3, and about twenty Honorable Mentions for each level.

In June, there will be a reception on the New Brunswick Campus of Rutgers University for Brandon and the other New Jersey contest winners.

- At the All County Indoor Track Meeting on February 26th at Ramsey High School, Ali Metwali (boy's shot put) and John Follety (boy's 55 meter dash) were both named to the Honorable Mention All County list. This is a great honor for both of these athletes.
- At the Bergen County Indoor Track Championships at the NYC Armory, two new Girls Indoor Track records have been established: senior Ashley Vargas in the 3200 Meters (13:00.5 sec) and senior Alanna Blocklin in the 600 Meters (1:52.8 sec.).
- Senior wrestlers Will Esposito and Dan Suarez are District champions by winning their weight classes at the District Tournament at Leonia on February 21st. They will wrestle in the Regionals, along with juniors Dakotah Romeo and Christian Pecoraro on February 27th.

5. Field trips

- **NJ State Elks Peer Leadership Conference** - Eleven students in Peer Leadership were afforded an annual opportunity to attend a three day conference on leadership sponsored by the New Milford Elks and the Municipal Alliance and coordinated by the NJ State Elks Association on February 6th through February 8th. Students had the opportunity to experience national speakers on topics of drug and alcohol awareness, leadership, teen issues and much more. They also interacted with peers from many different high schools around the state. A total of 535 students attended this conference. Each year the New Milford Elks and Municipal Alliance fully fund this program for each individual at \$350 per person.
- **The Second Annual Conference on Human Rights - Slavery in the 21st Century - Kean University**- Students in the Holocaust/Genocide course were afforded an opportunity to attend a university program on human rights issues at Kean University on February 12th. Invited by the President of the University, Dr. Dawood Farahi, students had an opportunity to learn about the issues surrounding human trafficking in today's world. Keynote speaker, Ishmael Beah, a former child soldier of war from Sierra Leone spoke to the audience about his experiences during war, his rehabilitation after war and his rescue by the United Nations at the age of thirteen from war torn Sierra Leone. In addition, students heard from Dr. Kevin Bales of Free the Slaves and Nan Kennelly, a U.S. State Department official on the current status in our world involving human trafficking. This was an eye opening experience for our students as most were not aware of the extent of slavery in modern times.
- Officer Wild, Mr. Coviello, Mr. Devereaux, and Mr. Manzo brought fifty-four NMHS students on a joint Sociology/Forensics class trip to the Bergen County Jail and Bergen County Criminal Investigations Unit on February 18th. This was a culminating activity for both the sociology and forensics students who had both been studying how our society controls and deals with deviant behavior. The students were showed incredible aptitude during this field experience applying previously learned knowledge to activities. The experience was incredibly educational and we look forward to partaking in other programming offered by the Bergen County Sheriff's Department. The Sociology students are working with Officer Wilde to attend a major trial at the Bergen County Courthouse in the near future to further their understanding of how our society enforces social control.
- The French classes again presented a program to the eighth grade at the Middle School. The goals were to inform the students of the importance of the French language in the world, to make them aware of the career advantages involved in learning one or more world languages, and acquaint them on the cultural trips and activities offered in the

French program at the high school. Students were reminded that America's biggest trading partner is Canada and New Jersey's largest trading partner is the French speaking province of Quebec. When doing business with Quebec, all initial business contacts must be made in French. The fact that President Obama made his first foreign visit to Canada, visiting Montreal and Toronto, underscores the importance of our trade with Canada and the need to have personnel with a good knowledge of the French language. French is spoken in forty seven countries as either the first or second language, and in nine Arab countries. The European Community is the largest trading block in world and English and French are the major languages of the European Community. The students also presented skits from Madeline. The freshmen presented the Three Little Pigs in French and taught basic idioms. And students presented songs in both French and English from Les Miserables and Beauty and the Beast. They prepared two slide shows: one of their New York City trip and the other of their Quebec trip. They also had prepared a video on France, Quebec and the Annenberg French in Action Video/textbook which we use to learn French.

6. Guidance

- The High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) will be administered to all 11th grade students on March 3rd, 4th, and 5th 2009. 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.
- The Student Assistance Program is sponsoring a Class of 2012 Health and Alliance Seminar on Thursday, March 26th, 2009. The topics of the educational classes were selected by the freshman class and include: Understanding Your Body, Developing, Developing a Sense of Trust, Gang Involvement, Racial Diversity, Effective Study Skills, and Mind Altering Substances.
- On Friday, April 24th 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.
- On Tuesday, April 7th, 2009 the Guidance Department will be sponsoring the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) for any interested 11th grade students. The ASVAB will test students in three different areas—math, verbal, and science/technical skill. A total of eight subtests are combined to form these three categories. These subtests are: arithmetic reasoning, mathematics knowledge, word knowledge, paragraph comprehension, general science, electronics information, auto and shop information, and mechanical comprehension. Students will receive scores for all eight of these tests, along with interpretation of the scores.

7. Professional Development:

- On Friday February 6th World Language teachers Ms. Lyons & Mrs. Solimano went to Chatham High School to observe the use of technology in the World Language Classroom. At Chatham High School, they have a computer lab that is exclusively used by the World Language Department. Each computer is equipped with a headset, as well as a microphone, and students use the lab at least once a week to; record dialogues, listen to World Language Podcasts, and write compositions in foreign languages. The computer lab is also available for students to work on projects during lunch as well as after school. Also, each classroom is equipped with a SMARTBOARD, so that students are able to participate in online activities, take QUIA review quizzes, and view news broadcasts from around the world. The foreign language teachers at Chatham are able to

incorporate technology into their lesson plans on a daily basis, and are finding that even the simplest of grammar exercises are becoming more engaging to students once technology is added.

Mrs. Solimano and Ms. Lyons were able to exchange ideas with several of the teachers on how to incorporate IPODS in instruction, as well as given examples of free podcasts on the internet. Also, they discussed what New Milford High School was working on with PROJECT ABLE at the Madison Institute and found out that Chatham High School has replaced their Midterm Exams with a year-long performance based assessment project. These performance based assessments are similar to the PROJECT ABLE projects, and count for half of the final exam grade. Throughout the year, students are given various checkpoints for these projects. The Spanish II classes at Chatham create their own fairy tales using Photo Shop for their end of the year project. Finally, all of the students and teachers at Chatham High School are connected by a system called First Class which is similar to BLACKBOARD. On this system, teachers are able to post assignments, and students are also able to submit them electronically. It also allows students and teachers to communicate and discuss assignments and topics through the discussion board. At Chatham High School, most assignments and projects are submitted electronically, almost eliminating the need for paper copies.

Through this visit to Chatham, Ms. Lyons and Mrs. Solimano were given the opportunity to exchange ideas with the teachers at Chatham, and find interesting and innovative ways to incorporate technology in the classroom.

8. Facilities

9. Other

- On February 13th several professional performers, led by Alexander Diaz, performed in a wonderful love song cabaret to benefit this year's spring musical, "Working." This fundraiser was incredibly successful with over three hundred patrons in attendance! Performers included alumni Josh Delacruz and Christian Diaz as well as "Working" choreographer Lauren Palmeri. It was a truly enjoyable event featuring the public's favorite love songs from a variety of musicals and artists.
- The Opening Knights presented their annual fundraiser, winter performance on February 6th and 7th. This year the Knights produced an interactive murder mystery that was student written and directed with two alternate endings. There was murder, fun, and cookies for over eighty patrons that attended the two performances. A cast of over forty students were all able to play lead roles. They should be commended for their ability to create their own show that was truly professional. Friday night was directed by Jessica Milne assisted by Jimmy Ordonez, and Saturday was directed by Meredith McCann assisted by Tony Crouchelli.
- Dorene Zacher (S.A.C.) and Melanie Siliato (Guidance Counselor) are currently in the process of scheduling a fund raiser that will benefit the students of New Milford High School. Applebee's, the restaurant franchise, offers a fundraising opportunity for schools to raise money. Raising the money is as easy as driving to Applebee's and ordering a fulfilling dinner where 10% of all bills will be donated to the school when patrons identify themselves as New Milford High School supports. Further information will be supplied when all aspects are finalized.
- Congratulations to the NMHS Bowling Team. They have been crowned BCSL Olympic Division Champions. In addition, the team won their 4th consecutive NJSIAA Sectional Championship!!

- The Girl's Basketball team will play at home versus Cresskill for the league title on February 27th at 7:00pm. The girls will also play a NJSIAA tournament game at home on March 5th at 7:00pm. The opponent is yet to be determined.
- The French classes again continued the tradition of The French Kiss Sale, which began more than twenty years, and had a very successful fund raising event. All kisses are individually made and messages are written out by the students. The French Kiss Sale supports the Nobel Peace Prize winning aid organization, Doctors without Borders, and the French Honor Society's foster child. In the past, contributions were also given to the Mike Pevny Scholarship Fund and the Katrina flood victims in Louisiana.