

January 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>
Jim Shea	History	12/18/07	2	Eric Sheninger
Jim Carr	Guidance	12/19/07	2	Eric Sheninger
Karina Porr	Guidance	1/8/08	8	Eric Sheninger
Walt Pevny	Industrial Arts	1/9/08	1	Eric Sheninger
Dale Major	History	1/10/08	1	Eric Sheninger
Jamie Bruno	English	1/11/08	1	Eric Sheninger
Patricia Bernardo	PE/Health	12/18/07	4	Jerry Perrone
Greg Kelly	PE/Health	12/19/07	2	Jerry Perrone
Tom Slane	PE/Health	1/10/08	2	Jerry Perrone
Lynette Bettini	Art	1/9/08	5	Louis Manuppelli
Faye Consentino	English	1/9/08	8	Louis Manuppelli
Maria Grompone	Italian	1/10/08	4	Louis Manuppelli
Amy Solimano	Spanish	1/10/08	6	Louis Manuppelli
Rose DePoto	English	1/10/08	7	Louis Manuppelli

Summaries:

2. Guest lecturers

- Two members of Leftfield Productions spoke to Mr. Lockhart's Film Studies class on 1/7/08 as they took a break from filming "The Principal's Office" here at NMHS. The show focuses on the daily life of various Principals across the country and is set to air on TruTV (what was once Court TV) later this year. I will be featured in the pilot episode. Colby Gaines (producer) and Robin Mueller (director of photography/cameraman) spoke about how they became involved in film production and the specifics of putting together reality television programs. At the conclusion of the class any students interested in film production were offered internships at Leftfield Productions over the summer!!!
- Mrs. Bettini's art classes were given a presentation by Julia Nolan from the Art Institute of New York. She presented video clips covering advertising, animation, audio production, broadcasting, digital media, fashion, game and art design, graphics, illustration, industrial design, web design and visual effects. Mrs. Nolan allowed several students to try out some of the video games designed by Art Institute Students.
- A Berkeley College representative will be coming in on 1/15 to make a presentation to juniors/seniors during HE/PE classes regarding self-confidence and goal setting.

3. Innovations:

- An Elective Information Day was held on Friday December 14th. Teachers in the core content areas in grades 9-11 spoke about the various electives for approximately 10 minutes in each of their respective classes. The overall goal was for students to gain a better understanding of the wealth of electives that are offered at NMHS and to increase registration in these courses.
- Peer Leadership is currently continuing to raise funds for the purchase of solar cookers that will assist refugees fleeing the genocide in the Darfur region of the Sudan. Currently, the students have raised \$1,200. A dance is planned for February 23, 2008 to continue this effort.

- On November 27, 2007, 149 juniors sat for a “mock HSPA” test. The test consisted of two sections: 35 multiple choice questions and 9 open ended questions. The tests were scored by the math department using a rubric similar to the State of NJ HSPA rubric:
 - Advance proficient – above 80% on both sections – 13 students (8.7%)
 - Proficient - above 50 % on both sections – 62 students (41.6%)
 - Partially Proficient - below 50 % on both sections – 74 students (49.6%)
 Partially proficient students will be assigned to an after school HSPA prep class. This class will be taught by the student’s math teacher. The emphasis will be on writing open ended questions. The students that scored below 50% on the multiple choice questions will be assigned to a weekly Study Island in addition to the after school class. Study Island is an interactive internet HSPA skills program. These students will be given an access code to Study Island. Students can access this program at any time through the internet. We expect each student to utilize this program a minimum of 30 minutes per week to reinforce and strengthen their basic math skills. Study Island generates individual student progress reports. These reports are emailed to the teacher each week. The reports tell how long the student was at the site, the drill and practice topics of the week by NJ Standard and difficulty level, number of problems attempted, percent correct and the individual student cumulative progress. Twenty five juniors will be assigned to Study Island. These 25 students and an additional 49 more will be in the after school prep classes.
- The members of the French Honor Society are again preparing for their annual French Kiss Sale. Chocolate kisses with red hearts, arranged in cellophane and tied with red, white and blue ribbons are sold for \$1.00 each. Each kiss has an individualized Valentine message in French and English, which is chosen by the sender and attached to the ribbons. French Kisses are delivered by French students to each homeroom on the morning of Valentine’s Day. This is our twenty first year of making “French Kisses” and it has become a New Milford High School tradition! The funds raised are used to sponsor our foster child from French Africa, and for contributions to Doctor’s Without Borders, the Katrina hurricane victims in Louisiana and the Michael Pevny scholarship fund.
- The math department and Mrs. Vicari’s 9th Grade Computer Applications are working on a collaborative project using statistics, probability, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft Word. Students estimated and recorded data and will use Microsoft Excel to perform calculations, create charts, research statistics on the Internet and use Microsoft Word to summarize the project.
- Student talent and initiative are driving the Opening Knights Winter Cabaret, entitled "Everything You Know Is Wrong." Sketches are being staged by co-directors Michael Kusnir and Sean Walsh under the supervision of Mr. Lockhart. Because this is such a busy time of year with sports, mid-terms, college applications and the musical, the bulk of rehearsals are arranged among the students involved who work independently to create or develop comedy premises and ideas they have been given by the directors. This form of theater takes a truly collaborative approach, especially in comparison with main stage productions in the auditorium. Satirical targets include pompous Broadway theater, elementary-school pageants, the Sopranos, history and Mr. Sheninger's television notoriety. The performance will be Friday, February 1st (celebrating the end of MidTerms!) in the cafeteria, which the Stage Crew will transform into a performance space under the guidance of Mr. Coviello and parent (and theater professional) Mr. George Milne, using portable lighting and sound equipment. Students will be baking and brewing coffee for the refreshments which are sold and served at the tables throughout the show. Board members are heartily encouraged to come and partake! All proceeds will benefit the James Africano Auditorium by allowing the Opening Knights to purchase some new stage lighting!
- This year’s producers of the 2008 spring musical *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, Rose De Poto and John Coviello, are happy to announce that there will be a fundraising drive for a **Drama Donor Award** plaque that will be permanently housed in front of the James Africano

Auditorium doors. This plaque will list the names of donors who have contributed from \$200- \$500+ to continue the school's long-standing and successful musical tradition. Alumni and retired staff members will be the first people contacted for contributions via a letter or e-mail message. Also, a letter will reach parents of current students with the next report card mailing. Anyone who donates will also receive 2 free tickets to *Thoroughly Modern Millie* on March 27, 28, 29, or 30. Donor names will also be included on a donor page of the playbills, and be announced before the start of each performance! If you are interested in becoming a **Drama Donor Contributor**, contact John Coviello or Rose DePoto at the school's website

4. Student honors:

- Congratulations to junior Judy Koo. She is one of seven participating artists in the Korean Artist Exhibition at Bergen Pac in Englewood, N.J. Her work will be on display January 5th through January 28th and the reception will be held on Friday, January 25th from 6:00 pm to 7:30.
- Yearbook Co-Editor Paul Robalino was accepted at Yale University.
- Students Judy Koo, Angenille Barredo, Mathew Kaprielian and Jennifer Montecillo are submitting drawings and painting for Scholastic Artist Awards. They are trying out for regional or national recognition. Christian Hincapie is submitting a senior portfolio. If it is chosen he will receive a scholarship and his work will be on exhibition in the Brooklyn Museum of art. Mrs. Bettini has been helping them with the process and taking digital pictures of their work. Mr. Pevny is assisting them with labeling and sizing the digital pictures.
- The Holocaust Study Tour 2007 participants have been invited to the Kaplan Jewish Community Center on the Palisades to speak at their annual Holocaust Commemoration program on Sunday, January 27, 2008 at 1:30 PM. The audience will experience the documentary and have an opportunity to ask the students questions regarding their experiences.
- The Music Department has been in high gear since the New Year. On Saturday January 5, 2008 four members of the Chorus were chosen, through a rigorous audition process, to be members of the 2008 North Region 1 Chorus. They are Melissa Milne, Jonell Robles, Azela Zarate, and Hannah Faye Zarate. Mrs. Swartz spent the day as moderator of the Soprano II judging room.
- Evening, a full day and weekend rehearsals for the Bergen County Chorus start on January 8 and culminate on Sunday January 13, 2008 with the afternoon concert at Northern Highlands High School. The New Milford members are Lijin Joy, Jonell Robles, Azela Zarate and Hannah Faye Zarate. Mrs. Swartz will be a rehearsal assistant on Saturday.
- AJ Scoppa: Associated Press 1st Team All-State selection for football.
- An outstanding performance by the Mock Trial Team in the first two rounds of competition at the Bergen County Court House. On Monday 1/7/08, the Prosecution team composed of attorneys Kristi Saporito and Sean Walsh and witnesses Kinjal Desai, Kirstie Mulhern, and Nishant Patel defeated the Academy of the Holy Angels. And on Wednesday 1/9/08, the Defense team, composed of attorneys Paul Robalino and Mike Kontomanolis, and witnesses Angela Wan, Damin Hashash, and David Gongon defeated Bergen County Tech. The team stands now undefeated. The Team's next competition will take place at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, 1/14/08, at the Bergen County Court House, in the Courtroom of Justice John Wallace Jr. (room 338).

5. Field trips

- The Choral Ensemble performed at the New Milford Senior Center and the Classic Residence to the delight of the Seniors. They were asked by both venues to return in the spring.
- The Chorus performed at Berkley and David Owens Middle School. Each teacher and student of Berkley graciously sent a note of thanks to the Chorus for a fine performance.
- On Thursday, December 20, 86 Marine Biology students were taken to the Palisades Center IMAX Theater to enhance their appreciation and broaden their knowledge on the history of both pre-historic and current marine lives. They watched two film shown in 3D, "Sea Monsters-3D" and "The Deep Sea 3D". After the trip, students were given time to work in groups, to research, create a presentation and discussed within a class science forum what they have learned based on the two film. The students also each individually created an advertisement, either in a video format or a PowerPoint presentation, to appeal to the general public using the words or implying by visualization the following words: Endangered Species, Extinction, Conservation, Global warming, possible solutions to the problem and why should we "go green".

6. Professional Development

- Ms. Tambuscio along with three other New Jersey teachers authored a Teacher's Resource guide for a film documentary entitled, *The Devil Came on Horseback*. This documentary was recently released worldwide and details the efforts of former U.S. Marine officer Brian Stiedle who served as an African Union military observer in Darfur, Sudan for six months in 2004 and 2005. During that time, he documented his observations with extensive photography and documentary footage of the current genocide in Darfur. (film website: (www.globalgrassroots.org and www.hopeartists.org)
- On January 18th, Jennifer Lyons and Maria Grompone will be traveling to South Brunswick to observe the use of IPODS in World Language classes. At South Brunswick High School, students have significantly improved their pronunciation and oral communication skills through the use of IPODS. Jennifer and Maria will be learning how to implement the use of IPODS in instruction to improve the oral communication of students at New Milford High School.
- Ms. Burten recently spent three weeks in India and visited several schools. The G.D. Somani Memorial School, in Bombay, is a progressive, private school that is trying to create a learning environment that prepares its students for the business world that the United States has created. Brian Seymour, the Vice-Principal, and Ms. Burten spent many hours discussing teacher qualification, student work ethics, discipline, and professional development, along with the establishment of a student to student communication program. In the upcoming weeks, we will discuss the possibility of starting a sister school program with New Milford students and the students of the G.D. Somani Memorial School.
- Ms. Keesing attended an excellent program, sponsored by the Bureau of Education & Research, entitled "21st Century Strategies for Strengthening Your School Library Program". Among the topics covered by well-known educator, Pam Berger, were: the importance of collaborations between library media specialists and teachers; the need for administrative support to encourage such collaborations – especially the need to plan together in advance, to allow sufficient time for a meaningful project, and to ensure that students will be successful and fully engaged; Web 2.0 technologies, such as wikis and blogs; web evaluation tools (most of which are already used); certain outstanding online resources for research; and, the importance of essential questions and the inquiry process.

7. Facilities

- The special education department received 4 brand new teacher desks.

8. Guidance

- On Thursday, January 3rd, NMHS welcomed back 12 alumni students from the class of 2007. Graduates spent the day speaking to students about their experiences in college. The 11th grade students were addressed in small groups with a focus on the college application process. The 12th grade students attended an assembly that focused on life as a first year college student. Both groups were given plenty of time to ask the alumni questions. At a lunch hosted by the Guidance Department, alumni had the opportunity to visit with department heads, board members, and other invited guests.
- During the week of January 7th, parents of 11th grade students received a mailing containing the following information: the results of the practice Math HSPA test that was administered in November, a "Parent Guide to the March 2008 HSPA Test" booklet, and a request for the parents of junior students to make an appointment for a meeting with their child's guidance counselor. This meeting will focus on the post high school planning process and the 12th grade course registration information.

9. Other

- Each department now has their own webpage. These can be accessed on the bottom left hand column of the high school homepage.
- Mr. and Mrs. Pevny donated \$100 from royalties from the sale of "Dear Daddy in Heaven" to the NM Scholarship Fund. The book was written in memory of Mike Pevny, a beloved PE/Health teacher.
- The Holocaust Study Tour program received a **\$5,000** grant from NJEA - Pride in Education grants to subsidize the educational outreach after the trip. This will include the book of reflections, documentary and exhibit in our school. This year's award from NJEA increased by \$2,500.
- "Good works are a link forming a chain of love around the world": - Mother Teresa Letters of love, gratitude, peace, goodwill and safe returns were sent from New Milford High School students to our troops in Iraq for the holidays. Teachers from various departments: Mrs. Hernandez's and Mrs. Bettini's Art students, Mr. Lockhart's English classes, Dr. Asa-Awuku's Chemistry classes, Ms. Vicari's Computer classes and Ms. Mitchell's Special Ed. students all cooperated in creating over 350 gorgeous, heart-felt letters and illustrated homemade cards. Fifty cards were sent to Kyle Dunbar a former student who is currently serving in Iraq. The other 300 were sent to V.A. hospitals and other American troops in Iraq. The letters were pure gifts from the heart.
- During the month of December 2007, the Big Brother and Big Sister Club of New Milford High School collected more than 800 dollars worth of new toys that were donated to the boys and girls club of Paterson. This event was possible thanks to the collaboration of the students and staff of New Milford High School. In addition to the toys, Ms. Hernandez art classes and Miss Lyons Spanish 4th and 6 period classes created piñatas stuffed with candy and toys for the children. We also had a special performance by the STEP team. After their performance, the girls took time to show the children how to step; they did an excellent job. The Boys and Girls Club of Paterson has enriching and fun activities that provide alternatives to negative influences and fill the children they serve with a sense of ability, influence, and belonging. The Big Brother and Big Sister club of New Milford is proud to help and support such a program. This was a unique and rewarding experience.
- Some of Mr. Andolino's original (ragtime) music was used in the film "Manufacturing Dissent" - a documentary film on the controversial filmmaker Michael Moore. It is available to rent at Blockbuster. The music is heard during the history of Flint, Michigan scenes.
- The Choral Ensemble kept their tradition of caroling through the halls before the Holiday break began.

- The Boys Basketball team won the Group I Holiday Tournament for the 2nd consecutive year.
- Dan Suarez placed 5th at the BCCA wrestling tournament.
- Many students involved with the N.M.H.S. drama club, The Opening Knights, and stage crew have been volunteering their expertise and service at the D.E. O. Middle School for their Spring musical production of *Into The Woods Jr.* This community service has further strengthened our on-going goal for a sound articulation process between our two institutions of learning. It is our hope that this will help to ensure the continuation of our long standing tradition of excellent theatrical programming and productions. The following students are to be commended for their efforts: Hannah-Faye Zarate and Michael Kontomanolis (Student Directors), Rachel Phillips and Vanessa Rappa (Choreographers), Matthew Kaprielian (Art Direction/Scenic Decoration), Justin Munier (Lighting Operator), and last but not least, Jessica Milne, Andrew Bridge, and Sean Walsh (Student Liaisons and Production Assistants).
- This year's Spring Musical, the Tony Award winning *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, is now cast and in full production! Set in New York City in 1922, it's about changing times, changing people, finding love where you least expect it, and of course an evil villainess who tries to sell our heroines into white slavery in South East Asia! The musical will be starring Hannah-Faye Zarate as Millie, Mike Kusnir as Jimmy, Mike Kontomanolis as Trevor, and Natalie Eguila as Mrs. Meers among other rising stars.