

*Bucks Bulletin is a project of the students and staff of Washington Island School.*

## Bucks Bulletin: September 2022 Principal's Report

By Tim Verboomen

This school year is off to an excellent start. Our first-day-of-school community picnic was an enormously successful celebration of our students and school. Thank you to everyone who was able to join us that first day.

We hope hosting a back-to-school event, like the picnic, will become an annual tradition. For those who weren't able to attend (especially if you happened to be at home with COVID-19), we hope to see you there next year!

### A Memorable Beginning

As many doubtlessly already know, this will certainly be the most memorable beginning of a school year of my career. I was home with COVID-19 for the first two days of school. I greeted our bussers, families, and random community mem-

bers as they passed by my house, and technology offered me an opportunity to have a virtual presence on the first day of school. There are many things a principal would be doing on the first day of school, especially a principal who organized a first-ever community event for lunch. Being unable to do most of those things would be problematic for most schools, but not here. Our teachers and staff members stepped up and made sure our first days were smooth, positive, and very fun. Again, thank you to everyone who participated.

### Exciting Opportunities

September was also filled with many exciting opportunities here at school. Our fifth through twelfth grade students participated in some citizen science by tagging butterflies

and collecting samples to aid scientists in researching *Ophryocystis Elektroscirra* (OE), a debilitating protozoan parasite that infects monarchs. Our ninth and tenth graders had an opportunity to go on a field trip for their history classes. Those students visited the Jacobsen Museum to get a first hand glimpse of island history, learning where those artifacts fit into the historical timeline. Our students will also be joining our island community members and senior citizens with a Packers themed lunch in the community gym on Sept. 23. We look forward to another similar opportunity with them around Christmas time. In other news, some of our high school students contemplating college will be attending our first Wisconsin Education Fair. Our students will have access to over 150 organiza-

tions (colleges, universities, US military branches, and even specialty schools) on Sept. 28. Steve Waldron will be working with our third and fourth graders on identifying plant species in Big and Little Marsh Natural Area, learning more about predator vs prey, and more. September is already a very exciting month of learning and fun for our students.

### Partnering with our school

We look forward to partnering with you — our community — to continue giving our students ever more exciting, memorable, and meaningful opportunities. If you have any ideas for how we might be able to work together, doing good things for our students, please contact us at school. We look forward to hearing from you.



PHOTO BY TIM VERBOOMEN

All students, staff, families, and community members were invited to the first ever First Day of School Community Picnic. Fun was had by all!



PHOTO BY TIM VERBOOMEN

Mr. Verboomen facetime'd the students from his home as they walked into school.



PHOTO BY TIM VERBOOMEN

Mrs. Cornell held the iPad that Mr. Verboomen was on at school so he could greet the students.



PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

Bjorn made an appearance at the Community Picnic in order to welcome back our students, families and the community.

## Eighth Grade Mystery Writers



PHOTO BY KAYLA MANN

Eighth grade students crafted engaging mystery narratives to share with their classmates in ELA. Students worked to improve their knowledge by writing engaging leads, using strong descriptions to transport the reader into the setting, and to include twists and turns to keep the audience on their toes. The results left their classmates enthralled in each other's stories and excited for more!

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# Students as Citizen Scientists

By Miranda Dahlke, Middle School Math & Science Teacher

“A member of the general public who collects and analyzes data relating to the natural world, typically as part of a collaborative project with professional scientists,” is the definition of a citizen scientist according to the dictionary. Students in grades 5-12 had the opportunity to engage in the 5th Annual (minus COVID-19 year) Monarch Tagging Trip to Plum Island as citizen scientists. In partnership with Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Ophryocystis elektroscirrha (OE), infecting the world monarch butterfly population. OE parasites only infect monarchs, and queen butterflies and are not transmitted to humans. If infected in the larval stage, monarchs can emerge as an adult with physical wing and abdomen defects. Monarchs can also become infected as an adult through mating or interacting on a food source where an infected monarch with spores has landed. In order to see if a monarch is infected, a sam-

Jim for boating us over to the island.

## Student Reflections

“During the Plum Island/monarch tagging expedition, I got to test my knowledge. I got the opportunity to hold butterflies, evaluate them for sickness, figure out their sex, and so much more. I didn’t do much catching as much as I logged information and held the butterflies for the procedures. All in all, we caught around 44 monarch butterflies and are test-

ing around 36 for the OE parasite. I enjoyed this experience because I got to perform what I learned within the classroom on the actual butterflies. Overall this was a very fun, yet helpful, field trip and I am so glad I got to partake in it.” -Nineth-grader

“I did not find any monarch butterflies with OE but we did find them with babies. I also noticed that not a lot had wing damage so they must have been pretty new. Also I noticed that there were a lot of male butterflies, and I like running after butterflies with a net. :)” -Nineth-grader

“I loved going to Plum Island and studying butterflies. The whole experience was awesome, and I had fun catching the butterflies.” -Tenth-grader

“I had fun at Plum Island and I identified female or male monarchs. My team and I identified that there were a lot more males than females.” -Seventh-grader

“I caught three butterflies, but one escaped before we could tag it.” -Sixth-grader

“I was in charge of the data and tagging. I helped take samples for testing for OE which is a parasite that the monarchs have. I took a piece of tape and put it on their body and then put it on a note card so we can look at it later.” -Eighth-grader

“It’s actually really simple to tell the difference between male and female butterflies. The biggest giveaway is that males have glands on their bottom wings, and females have thicker veins.” -Eighth-grader



PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

## Grades 5-12 students participated in tagging monarchs and performing physicals on Plum Island.

Service students spread out across the various trails with nets, clipboards, datasheets, and tagging equipment in search of capturing migrating monarchs.

Prior to this event, middle school students learned about the new endangered distinction, migration patterns, life cycle, and monarch butterfly look-alikes, whereas the high school students learned about a parasite,

ple of abdomen scales viewed under a microscope can tell you quickly if there are OE spores present and the monarch is infected.

Over the course of the past five years, our students have tagged many butterflies and submitted their data to MonarchWatch.org to aid in the study of the migration patterns of monarch butterflies. In addition to tagging the butterflies, students collected information about sex, forewing length, abdomen shape, and wing wear to organize and send, along with abdomen scale samples, to the University of Georgia Project Monarch Health. Mrs. Dahlke is in contact with the Altizer lab that collects the data, so that our students get an opportunity to hear from Dr. Altizer herself once our samples have been processed. A final connection our middle school students will make is with the Journey North Symbolic Migration Project. They will design and send monarch butterflies in art class as a care package to a partner school in Mexico near the monarch’s wintering destinations.

Overall we captured and tagged the most butterflies this year: 44 monarch butterflies, 60% male, and only three infected (2 female and 1 male). Thank you to FOPPI, U.S.FWS, and Captain

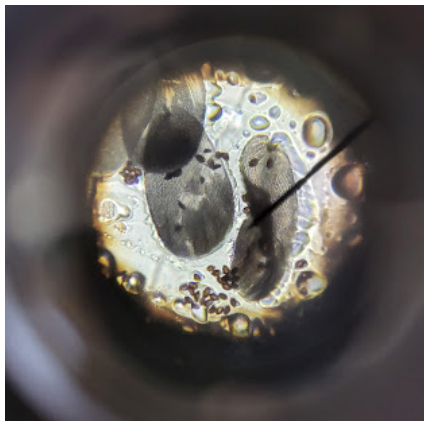


PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

**The ninth and tenth grade biology students extended the data collected on the tagged Monarchs to search for those infected with a parasite called OE. Here is a picture of the microscope view of the spores from infected monarchs caught on Plum Island.**



PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

**This ninth grader caught two monarchs.**

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## Diving Into the Design Process

By Alyssa Wagner

The first and second grade students dove into their first unit of science class this year learning about engineers and the engineering design process.

As a way to demonstrate their understanding, students took on the task of creating an invention that would solve this problem: How can I keep my headphone cords from tangling? Working in pairs, the students had only tape, pipe cleaners and wire to use in the planning and building of their invention.

When it came time for testing their inventions, some groups realized they needed to make minor improvements to ensure a successful outcome. By the end of class, each group had a unique and inventive solution to the problem.

Finally, doing what good engineers do, each group communicated and shared their ideas with the class.

Much fun and learning was had by all and the students are looking forward to more hands-on science projects and inventions this school year.

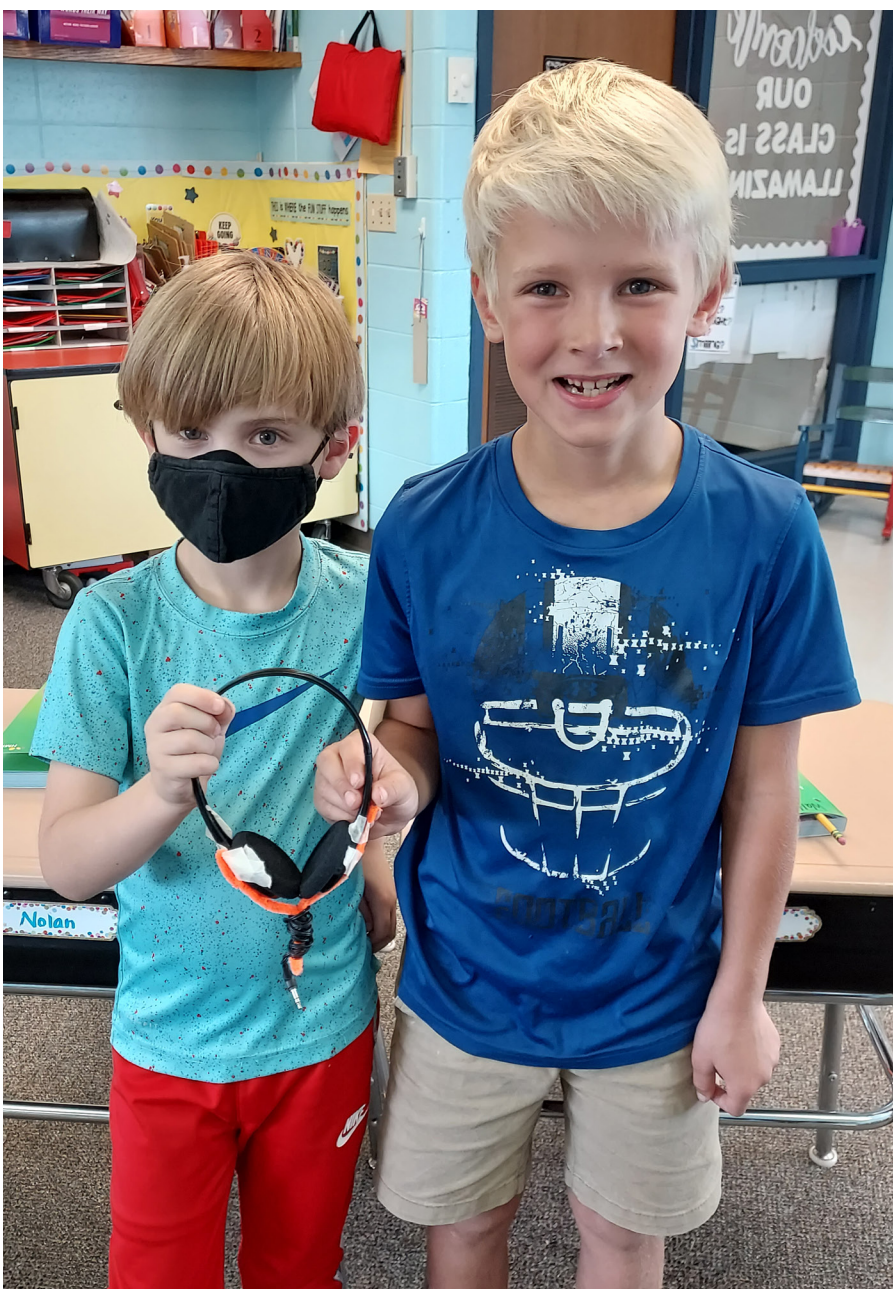


PHOTO BY ALYSSA WAGNER

These two students were proud to show their unique design to solve the headphone tangling problem.

## Butterfly Poems

By Leila Nehlsen and her students

As a way to reflect on the experience of tagging monarch butterflies on Plum Island, Senior High School English Students wrote poems to capture their day. The following are a few of the poems. Enjoy!

### Plum, a Surreptitious Sanctuary

By Jake

Crystalline globules dance upon the churning unearthly beast,  
Carrying the invaders to a bastion of Nature.  
Unlike the Sundered sanctuary of stone,  
This land is an untainted home to all who seek refuge.  
Swarms of gnats blacken the sky like clouds before a storm,  
And birds boisterously boast upon the silent structures that remain.  
Verdure viciously explodes in a victorious viridescence,  
Secluding shrubbery safeguards beautiful secrets.  
Golden meadows contrast the shell like the eye of a hurricane,  
Here magnificent monarchs flourish and flit like true nobility.  
Unlike that barren Rock, this is Plum, a true fruit of Nature.

### Fly High

By Breanna

I wish I were a fearless flower.  
Your limbs lie on me in the sweet sunny air,  
Delicate as the silence of the Sun's breath.  
Your wings of gold flutter with beauty and grace.  
I wish I were a fearless flower,  
Watching you, an angel, floating toward the sacred sky.  
The abiding amber of your sails brightens the eternal end,  
Flying high and free as the stars sitting in the night sky.  
I wish I were a fearless flower,  
Your palliative presence is never long enough,  
Though you must leave this time for good,  
When I see you in the sky I will know it is your essence flying high.



## MATH TEACHER OPENING

Washington Island School is seeking a passionate, self-starting Mathematics educator for our secondary students. Certified candidates will have a thorough understanding of higher mathematics, as well as experience in lesson planning, curriculum development, and classroom management techniques appropriate for high school students. As a teacher in the smallest K-12 school in Wisconsin, applicants should be comfortable working independently in collaboration with a small community of K-12 educators serving an island school district with a population of approximately 65 students. Qualities of flexibility, professional dedication, and personal fortitude are essential. Applicants are not only applying for a teaching position but a lifestyle change and adventure! Feel free to contact Sue Cornell or Tim Verboomen if you have questions or wish to learn more about the position. You can also apply through WECAN

(Wisconsin Education Career Access Network)

[sue.cornell@island.k12.wi.us](mailto:sue.cornell@island.k12.wi.us)

[tim.verboomen@island.k12.wi.us](mailto:tim.verboomen@island.k12.wi.us)

920-847-2507

<http://www.island.k12.wi.us/>

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# High School Students Visit Jacobsen Museum



PHOTO BY MARY GRZELAK

Jacobsen Museum curator, Nina Herbst, teaches students about the items and artifacts.

**By Mary Grzelak, High/Middle School Social Studies Teacher**

After studying prehistoric people and their way of life, we decided to learn about the people who lived on our island during that time period. We were already aware that American Indians had lived here a long time before any European settlers arrived. We hoped to learn where and how they lived on the island.

At the Jens Jacobsen Museum we were shown a number of interesting items by curator Nina Herbst. An old map of the island that showed settlement areas was a good place to start. Seeing where cornfields and home sites were around Little Lake helped to orient us. However, Jens Jacobsen found many of the artifacts on his farm on the east side. One particular stone has been identified as a fishing weight that would have been tied onto a net. We could clearly see the place where a line would have been tied around it. Fishing and growing corn were the Potawatami's main food sources.

After looking at much of the collection, we ended our visit with a discussion of the Jacobsen cabins. His building techniques of using vertical, unpeeled logs were fairly unique. We were interested in learning where the cabins are located. As we left the museum we peeked

into Jens Jacobsen's summer cabin which is furnished authentically. It's a small, but peaceful place to spend the summer months.

Thank you to Mrs. Herbst for her time and knowledge of the items we looked at. The museum is a great resource for the island community.



PHOTO BY MARY GRZELAK

The ninth and tenth grade students visit the Jacobsen Museum.



PHOTO BY MARLEEN EHRLICHJOHNSON

Inspired by the Northern Lights on Labor Day weekend, the third and fourth grade students learned about the cause of the natural phenomenon. Pictured here they are discovering the power of magnets after a discussion about the Earth's Magnetic Field. This fourth grade student thought of moving the magnet on top of the box using a magnet inside the box.

## Studying the Northern Lights

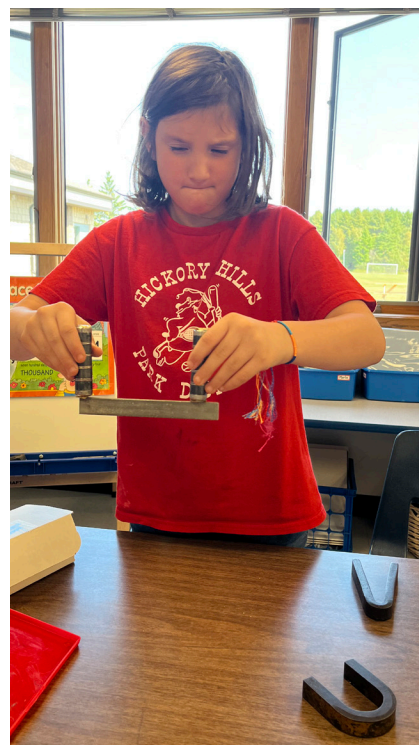


PHOTO BY MARLEEN EHRLICHJOHNSON

After several tries with determination and different magnets, this fourth grade student found the right combination to hold up an iron bar with magnets.



PHOTO BY MARLEEN EHRLICHJOHNSON

These two third grade students are testing the magnetic force between two magnets, as well as experiencing the repelling between two like poles.