

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

Washington Island School District

December, 2020

Bucks Bulletin

Thank you so much to the generous donors that recently made contributions to our school - The WI Education Foundation, WI Mutual Insurance, Detroit Harbor Ladies Aid, and Stella Maris Parish. Your continued support of our school is greatly appreciated!

Check out the school website (www.island.k12.wi.us) to see the video of our Veterans Day Program, this year delivered at school via the school intercom system, due to COVID-19. We are grateful to have been able to organize a presentation of sorts, as we endeavored to let all Island veterans know that they were in our minds, and in our hearts, on November 11th.

Thanks goes out to Sophomore Jake who exceeded the event. Students and staff were given a briefing about this special day on which we express our thanks and our gratitude to those men and women who have so courageously served, or are serving our country during their military attachment. Ms. Brei-semeister also introduced the history behind the 1938 song, God Bless America, made famous by composer Irving Berlin and singer Kate Smith, to her music students.

Ms. Dahlke has the middle schoolers engaged in the Scholastic Hardest Math Problem Competition. All students in grades 6-8 are encouraged to try out a myriad of math problems, and explain their thinking in order for their chance to win a laptop, tablet, and scholarship money to apply to post-secondary education. This is the second year our students have participated in this contest. We look forward to the final results of this academic endeavor.

Ms. Kayla Mann and Ms. Marleen Ehrlich-Johnson have begun preparations for the 2020-21 Wisconsin Spelling Bee. This competition is organized through CESA 7, and is open to students from grades 4-8. The practice spelling word lists have been sent home with students. They are encouraged to begin their spelling work for this event. We are eager to see who emerges from our January 2021 tournament, to get an opportunity to compete against other Door and Brown County students in February's contest. This year's Spelling Bee will be held virtually. More details will be forthcoming.

Ms. Grzelak provided a wonderful opportunity for the high school students, in-person and hybrid, to meet Professor John A. Cloud.

Ambassador (ret.) John A. Cloud is a professor in the National Security Department at the U.S. Naval War College. Ambassador Cloud retired in 2010 after almost 32 years in the U.S. Foreign Service.

He was the U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Lithuania from 2006 - 2009. He also served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Berlin, the U.S. Mission to the European Union, and the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw. He served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for International Economic Affairs on the National Security Council staff from 2001-2003. Mr. Cloud had earlier assignments in the State Department, Bonn, Germany, Mexico City, Mexico, and Warsaw, Poland.

Mr. Cloud met with the students and staff virtually, for nearly an hour. Students heard his governmental involvements, as well as his career experiences throughout his three decades of work for the U.S. Foreign Services. They were able to interact with him directly, asking questions during this time as well. It was an enlightening period for all of us who were in the room to hear him. It was also a great opportunity for our students to have a connection with the likes of someone such as Professor Cloud. Thank you for organizing this experience for our high schoolers, Mrs. Grzelak.

Math in science



PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

Sixth graders use math during science class, to practice finding the temperature of a mixture of two liquids.

More random acts of kindness

By Miranda Dahlke

Students were encouraged to continue spreading kindness by completing random acts of kindness throughout the school day.

As staff members observed students being kind, they were able to submit entries for the Friday, Dec. 11 drawing. There were many entries received, and ten winners were drawn from the pool. Each student received a cookie, a certificate, a bookmark, and will join the other entries on a bulletin board display in the commons.

Thank you to these students for showing "Kindness is contagious" at Washington Island School: Nia, Freya, Jaida, Xander, Jaylyn, Tristan, Cameron, Julia, Emily, and Breanna.



PHOTO BY ZUZKA KRUEGER

Congratulations to our Random Acts of Kindness Challenge winners who received a certificate, bookmark, and a special cookie delivery from the Kindness Cafe Cart.

What a year!

By Margaret Foss

Uncharted, unprecedented, remote, virtual, hybrid, pivot, isolation, quarantine, plague, digital platform, Zoom, distance...these are all words that have become a regular part of our vernacular. They may strike a nerve, or offer comfort, in the year of COVID-19.

Amidst all that the virus has required of us, the Washington Island School has maintained forward motion by focusing on ways to reimagine and recreate our delivery options. Teachers and administration have spent countless hours researching, experimenting, reflecting, and redesigning teaching and learning methods. These are the words we choose to reframe our way of thinking about all that has happened in these long, difficult months.

Given the multitude of obstacles and challenges all of us have faced in the past nine months, I am grateful to everyone—students, teachers, parents, administrators, school board members—for your patience, perseverance, and determination.

Our marvelous students have shown resilience and flexibility. Our esteemed teachers have distinguished themselves by adapting and carrying forth while seeking to maintain the high standards, utilizing unfamiliar pathways. Our industrious and persistent administration and school board members have waded through very murky waters to determine best responses to so many obstacles.

We will never be exactly the same as we were pre-COVID. There are silver linings all around us, and positive changes already in the works. So, while we continue to respond to the virus in necessary ways, there are glimmers of light at the end of the tunnel. I look forward to what will be revealed when we are finally on the other side. As we reflect on all that we have learned in the preceding months, I have no doubt that our little school and the community that supports it, will uncover new insights, possibilities, and inspirations. Thank you all! May 2021 be our best year ever!



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Holiday traditions



PHOTOS BY ALYSSA WAGNER

The first and second grade students have been “traveling around the world” to learn about holidays and traditions in other countries. Places “visited” include Germany, the Philippines, Israel to learn about Hanukkah, England, Mexico, New Zealand, and around the United States to learn about Kwanzaa and the American tradition of giving to others. For each destination, students “traveled” by plane, learned of their location by using a map, had their passports stamped, and made a special souvenir to help them remember each country’s or holiday’s unique traditions. Here is a picture of the students holding their souvenirs from Germany, Israel, and the Philippines.

Students show off the Christmas crackers they created while “traveling” to England to learn about English holiday traditions and customs. Inside the Christmas crackers are little toys and a festive Christmas joke, resembling what they traditionally include in their crackers each year. Each student made a Christmas cracker and then exchanged it with a classmate so they will be surprised when they pop it open on Christmas Day. They even made one for Mrs. Kanipes!

Ornaments



Published authors

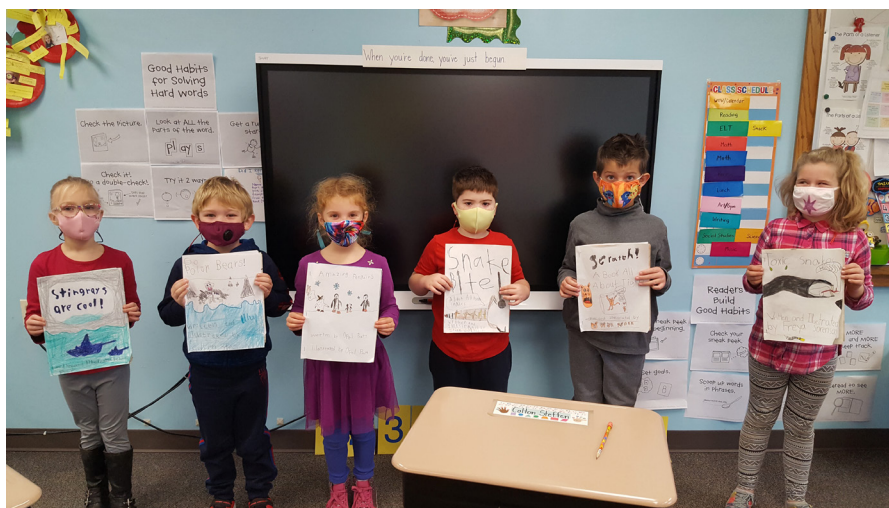


PHOTO BY ALYSSA WAGNER

Did somebody say published authors? That’s right! The first- and second-grade students worked diligently to write and illustrate their very own non-fiction books. Each student determined a topic of their choice they knew a lot about so they could write like an expert. They also referred to a book for some additional research. During the writing process, they studied special craft moves authors use and added them into their writing, such as pop out words, labels and captions, detailed pictures, pronunciation guides, definitions, comparisons, and fun facts to make their books come to life and answer all their readers’ questions. Students edited and revised their work to make it the best it could be. Finally, as real non-fiction authors do, they added a title page, table of contents, glossary, front cover, and back cover complete with a blurb to hook the reader into wanting to read the book. Each student presented their book aloud to the class. We learned so much about stingrays, snakes, penguins, tigers, polar bears, and sea otters. Wonderful work authors!

PHOTO BY ZUZKA KRUEGER

Students made ornaments in tech ed class to be sent to the state Capitol at the request of Governor Tony Evers. This year, instead of a holiday tree in the Capitol, they will be distributing the ornaments made by students from across the state to veterans’ homes, hospitals, and nursing homes.



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My dream

By Leila Nehlsen

After studying “I Have A Dream” by Dr. Martin Luther King, American literature students have followed up with their own “dream” plans. They researched, wrote and presented speeches, wrote letters, and finally wrote essays for the community. Following are two for you to read. To conserve space, sources have been left out at the end of each essay.

Anxiety and depression in teenagers

By Spencer

Imagine you are a teenager today. Imagine that you are in school, in a classroom, and you begin to think about something that has been worrying you the past couple days. Imagine that ten seconds later the teacher scolds you for not paying attention. You excuse yourself from the classroom. You are constantly upset because you just want to be heard, you just want to be happy, or you just want to understand why you are constantly sad or tired.

Now imagine that you are a classmate or teacher of someone who is often spacing out, seems tired, or is often very quiet around you. Imagine that your failure to act is the reason that your best friend or your student is dead.

My dream is for people to better understand anxiety or depression, to be more aware of the signs that point to these disorders, and to learn ways to prevent adding more stress on teenagers with these disorders.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website, studies in 2019 have shown that for every three teens there is at least one that has an anxiety disorder. Eighty percent of these children are undiagnosed, and thus are not getting treatment.

Dr. Mcarthy writes in her study on anxiety and depression disorders on HealthyChildren.org that these children are highly treatable but emphasizes the importance of catching the disorders early because the earlier the symptoms are detected, the earlier the children will recover.

There are many clues that indicate someone close to you has anxiety or depression. According to healthline.com, symptoms of depression include loss of appetite, weight change, loss of interest, irregular sleep patterns, constant feeling of guilt, constant anger or sadness, difficulty concentrating, suicidal thoughts, or even attempted suicide. Symptoms of anxiety, the same hotline provides, are similar to those of depression; feeling fatigued, difficulty concentrating, grinding teeth, racing heart, problems falling asleep at night or waking up in the morning, difficulty controlling emotions, such as fear or worry, restlessness, and panic or panic attacks. Knowing these symptoms will help to catch disorders early on and get someone in need diagnosed and treated by professionals.

By seeking help from professionals, teens with these disorders will be able to start medication or therapy to combat these conditions. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, medications are meant to treat both anxiety and depression at the same time because of their similarities. For people who do not wish to take medication, there is therapy, group meetings, and other helpful drug-free options listed on the Residential Anxiety and Depression Treatment Center website.

There are different ways for teens to seek help for the sake of their mental health, and there are also ways for parents to reach out to their children. Teens with depression or anxiety who do not wish to talk to their parents or friends about their emotions, feelings, or suicidal thoughts, can do it anonymously on the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Admission website. This helpline has helped over 68,000 people struggling with depression or anxiety every month, and the number of callers rises higher by the day.

Teens with mental health disorders do not always show signs of their condition. In that case, it is crucial for a parent to talk often to their child about his or her feelings and emotional struggles. By making this “at home check-up” a regular thing, parents of children with anxiety or depression are easily able to confront their child’s disorder early on, see the signs more clearly because of an attitude change, and help the child recover from the disorder much faster.

Now that you are educated on both anxiety and depression disorders, think about how you can help. Someone close to you just lost a relative! Someone close to you just broke up with their soulmate! Someone close to you is thinking about committing suicide! Someone close to you is having troubles at home! Will you try to help those around you that are struggling? Have you seen any of the signs in your friends? Have you had symptoms of anxiety or depression, yourself? Today, if you know someone struggling with anxiety or depression, I hope I gave you enough information to help, and allowed you to realize that you can make a difference in someone’s life.

America’s growing language gap

By Jake

Picture a world in which people are unable to communicate with one another. A world where the darkness of mistranslation and ignorance reign supreme. A world where the flexibility of other countries compared to our own has a vast gap in work ethics and windows of opportunity. This world may very well become our own, with American arrogance blinding our desire to expand our skills in linguistics. The fact that 75% of the world does not speak English stands as a testament that should provide us with enough basis to learn a second language. The European Union itself has a whopping 51% of its members capable of speaking English, further showing how far ahead of us the world is.

Bilingualism is an incredibly useful skill in life, for both fun and career opportunities. Bilingualism is well-known to enhance cognitive abilities, with effective proven results. People who speak a second language score higher on literacy, ACT, and math tests. A major perk of being bilingual is the fact that having it on one’s resume will greatly increase one’s chances of getting a job. On top of that, bilingual employees enjoy increased wages, anywhere from 5-20%. So, if you want a better job, you need to study a foreign language.

I believe that Americans should implement options for language classes, through increasing the numbers of foreign language teachers, valuing and ending discrimination towards those with a second language and expanding our immersion in other cultures through studying abroad. Knowing a second language leads one out of the confinement of the comfort of our culture into the vast interesting ideas of another culture. In the United States, American arrogance impedes many students from learning a second language. It is the reason why British historian Peter Stearns declares that Americans are “legendary” for being reluctant to learn a second language. American arrogance is the reason why our country is looked down upon by others, since we are seen as defiant and petulant, because many Americans believe that foreign people should learn English to do business with us. Do you really believe that this attitude is healthy for the future of our society? Do you want to be looked down upon? The Founding Fathers did not create a national language since their idea was that America would be diverse.

Only one out of five students K-12 in the United States have access to foreign language classes. This is partly due to a general lack of certified language teachers in the United States. America seems to only care about languages when the dominance of English is under threat. For example, during the Cold War, the study of Russian was a major national endeavor. However, as soon as the Soviet Union collapsed, America no longer taught the language. Some say that mandatory second language classes would be bad because many students would treat forced language classes as a subject to get a good grade in, rather than treating it as if it were a skill, many will denounce and discard it, leading to no actual learning of the language. I simply advocate for the optional ability to have a class if a student desires so.

Now, despite all these issues, some Americans believe that it’s irrelevant since they live in America, which is amusingly ironic since it all fits the trope of the arrogant American further. Some believe that learning a language is too hard, but that is ludicrous. The issue with the difficulty of learning a language is that age is important. One learns best when he/she is young, which is why I propose starting a second language in kindergarten, so the student grows up with peers who also speak the same foreign language. By keeping the mind challenged with a second language, these students will also likely be better prepared for higher class careers later on. Even we can do work to change the issue of the language deficit. By hiring a language teacher or allowing online classes to be taken during a study hall period, students can learn a second language to combat the vile opponent of ignorance. Together, we can prove to the world that America is not a land of arrogant elitists, but a melting pot chock full of many cultures and languages.

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Shooting for the moon!

By Marleen Ehrlich Johnson

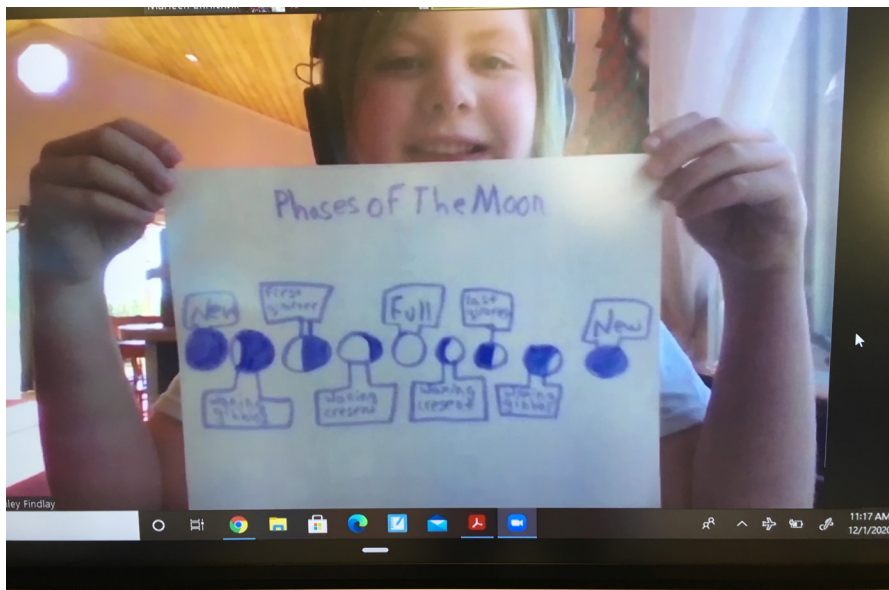
Seven Washington Island students are shooting for the moon and sending in essays this December to a contest offered through NASA's Future Engineers Artemis Moon to Mars program. One sixth-grade student, Julia Pratt; four fifth-grade students, Jaylyn Nickchen, Xander Weillbaker, Tristan Krueger, and Allison Bennett; and two fourth-grade students, Jaida Mann and George Findlay each wrote an essay that describes the attributes and skills of a pod of astronauts that they would bring with them if they had the opportunity to lead an expedition, 250,000 miles to the Moon for one week.

They also wrote about a robot or piece of technology they would leave on the moon to help future astronauts explore the moon. The hard part was writing an essay in only 100-200 words, and also waiting until March 17, 2021 to see if they are chosen as one of the semifinalists.

Selected semifinalists will be invited to represent their state or territory in a series of Artemis Explorer sessions with NASA experts.

Nine finalists will travel with a parent to NASA's Johnson Space Center next summer to learn about lunar exploration, and the national winner in each grade division will win a family trip to see the first Artemis test launch to watch the most powerful rocket in the world launch from Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

The best part: Every student who submits an entry will receive a certificate from NASA and be invited to a special NASA virtual event – with an astronaut!



PHOTOS BY MARLEEN JOHNSON

George is showing his understanding of the phases of the moon



Jaida told her classmates the phases of the moon as she orbited the "sun" and rotated the "moon" on its axis.



Tristan is checking the time, using the shadow on his sundial and then using the length of his body shadow to confirm what time of year it is.

Thank you, Washington Island essential workers!

The year 2020 has been extremely difficult for all, as we have faced unprecedented times with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Many have risked their lives for the wellbeing, safety, and health of others, and the students and staff at Washington Island School are very grateful for all of our essential Island workers and what they have done.

As a way to show our deepest and sincerest appreciation, all students in grades 4K-12 reached out to our Island community's essential workers in some way to say thank you. The following two letters are examples of ways students said thank you to our brave essential workers.

Dear Mann's Store employees,

I write you this letter to express my gratitude for the work, effort, and perseverance you proudly conduct in these unprecedented times. I devote appreciation to all of you living lives and running the local food store. Each one of you plays an important role that unites for the benefit of the Islanders and me. It is difficult to express enough gratitude in this letter from me to satisfy the importance of your service. I wish that all of your days will be fortunate and desirable. Consider this letter to be a kind reminder of your true inspiration and ever-lasting hope to the Washington Island community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Joseph and the Washington Island School Students

Dear brave community officers,

Thank you for protecting our community and keeping us safe! You are so brave to continue your job every day, especially throughout this pandemic. Even though you may have families at home, you still choose to risk your lives to save others. You face so much every day. From watching life be taken or given to people, seeing horrible accidents, to even just pulling someone over for going over the speed limit, you are truly making a positive impact on our island. Thank you!

Yours truly,
Breanna and the Washington Island School Students

Virtual collaboration

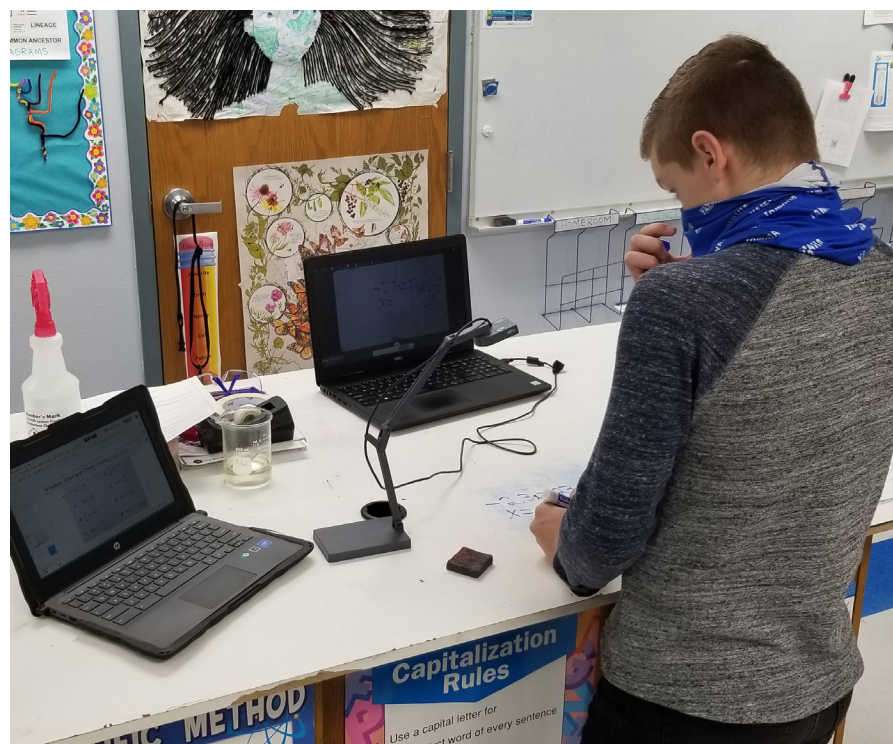


PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

Cam works on solving an inequality problem with his partner virtually, using the document camera to share his thinking.