

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

Off to a Great Start!

By Tim Verboomen

Another school year is off to a great start. Thank you to everyone who was able to join us for our third annual first-day-of-school community picnic. It was a gorgeous day and it's always such a great way to celebrate our students' return to school. We begin and end our school year with a picnic and invite our families & community members to join us in support of our Island youth. In fact, save the date! The end-of-the-year picnic will be June 6th ... we'll also be honoring six Island graduates that day!

Our enrollments are up 11% this year and we have 62 students in school for the 2024/25 school year. We have 24 high schoolers, 17 middle schoolers, and 21 elementary school students attending (so far) this year ... we're happy to be growing and hope the trend will continue!

Citizen-Science

September has been full of many exciting learning opportunities here at school. Our fifth through tenth-grade students participated in some citizen science on September 9th. They were on Plum Island tagging butterflies and collecting samples to aid scientists in researching *Ophryocystis Elektroscirrha* (OE), a debilitating protozoan parasite that infects monarchs. Those students ended the day on a Zoom call with Monarch scientists researching migration and the Monarch parasites.

Community Partnerships

On September 16th, our students also joined our Island community members and senior citizens with a Packers-themed lunch in the community gym. We look forward to our next similar opportunity to partner with WICHP by serving a holiday-themed breakfast for our students,

parents, and community members/Island seniors at school just before Christmas.

We're also continuing to look for ways to open the school to our community. This month we've added an adult class that began September 11th. With this first class, community members will have the opportunity to explore/use the school's Woods Shop. As of the writing of this report, we have 9 people signed up for a 10-person course, so we're thrilled with the interest and support from the community. Pam Josifek, our math teacher, will also be continuing to offer her very popular chair yoga classes for anyone in the community who'd like to participate on Thursdays at 4:30 pm!

Our Soccer Team/Athletics

The soccer team is having another great year and is undefeated so far this season. We have 14 boys and girls from 7th-12th grade playing this year. Coach Purinton and our soccer team managed a win for our first home game of the season against Gibraltar and we look forward to winning a couple more at home against Algoma on September 27th and against Stockbridge on October 5th. Our team enjoys having a good deal of Island support at each of their away games, but they look forward to playing at home for our island fans. Please join us on 9/27 at 4:30 and on 10/5 at 1:00 that afternoon. We're also planning to take all of our non-soccer high school students to the Gibraltar away game to cheer on our soccer team at that game on September 30 at 3:45. Speaking of Island athletics, our basketball teams are playing in the Great Lakes Islands Basketball Tournament sponsored this year by Put-in-Bay on South Bass Island, Lake Erie, Ohio. Our

team will be taking a Babler Coach Bus this year along with fans and family who are making donations to ride along. If you'd like to join us, or just make a donation in support of our teams, please call us at 920.847.2507. Go Bucks!

Homecoming

Our high school students were invited to Gibraltar's Homecoming this year. Most of our high school students are planning to either attend their football game on September 20th or the Homecoming dance on the 21st. We're grateful for our close relationship and partnership with Gibraltar and excited to be able to offer our Island youth these kinds of high school opportunities.

New Staff Members/New Roles

We're pleased to report, and are excited, that we have three new staff members in our school this year, Mrs. Bitta Johnson is our new special education teacher, Mr. Andy Kehren has taken on our PE and health program, and Miss Claire Wisniewski has joined us as a new elementary/special education paraprofessional. They are joining our team of extraordinary teachers. We also have a couple of familiar faces in new roles this year. Mrs. Kirsten

Foss is thrilled to be our new 4K/5K teacher, and Mrs. Mel Jones is stepping up to take on her new role as our guidance counselor, in addition to teaching art. We are truly fortunate to have such a committed group of educators on Washington Island!

Mrs. Jones will be taking 11th and 12th graders to a Wisconsin Education Fair. They will be going to the fair sponsored by UW Oshkosh, where our students will have access to over 100 area colleges, universities, military branches, and specialty schools, chat with representatives, meet other students, and narrow down their post-high-school plans.

School/Community Partnerships

We look forward to partnering with you — our community — to continue giving our students ever more exciting, memorable, and meaningful opportunities. Additionally, we're interested in expanding such opportunities to members of our community. We'd love to offer everything from short courses on knitting, to basic engine maintenance, to cribbage/board game nights. If you have any ideas for how we might be able to work together, doing good things for our students and community, please contact us at school. We look forward to hearing from you.



PHOTO BY TIM VERBOOMEN

Bucks scoring a goal at their home opener!



PHOTO BY MARLEEN EHRLICHJOHNSON

Mr. Verboomen and Sue Cornell were just two people who helped to put together the Back-to-School Picnic on the first day of school. Kirsten Purinton and Laura Findlay helped serve, too, and many people brought side dishes to compliment the hot dogs and brats!

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2024 Monarch Migration Count Dips



This group caught a monarch butterfly!

PHOTO BY MATT SULLIVAN



Students ready their nets through the pass near the range lights.

PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE



Tagged monarchs can be tracked on the monarchwatch.org website.

PHOTO BY GINNIE HARNEY

By Miranda Dahlke

Twenty-five middle and high school students set out on Monday, Sept. 9 to Plum Island in hopes of capturing, tagging, and surveying a slew of monarch butterflies on their annual migration towards Mexico. Weather was perfect and conditions were ideal to see monarchs on the move, but compared to the other Monarch tagging years, this year's capture number was significantly lower. Students caught and tagged 5 female butterflies that appeared to be on the beginning of their journey south.

Annually, Mrs. Dahlke partners with Friends of Plum and Pilot Island (FOPPI) to engage her students in this citizen science project. All

tagged butterfly codes are reported to monarchwatch.org. If anyone captures a butterfly that is already tagged, they can go to the website and log the location to track the migration patterns. Additionally, Biology students will analyze the abdomen scale samples under a microscope to test for the presence of OE, a life-threatening parasite, found in monarch butterflies. This data is sent to Project Monarch Health, a lab based out of the University of Georgia. Our data is compiled with the data from other citizen scientists around the nation to track patterns in the monarch butterfly populations. Hopefully, the number of monarch butterflies tagged this year doesn't signal a continued pattern of decline in years to come.



A 6th grader holds a captured monarch awaiting tagging and data collection.

PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE



Julia shares the first catch of the day.

PHOTO BY GINNIE HARNEY



A group surveys their monarch butterfly.

PHOTO BY GINNIE HARNEY

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We Are All Unique!

By Alyssa Wagner

One of the first social studies units completed in first and second grade promotes the understanding and acceptance of the similarities and differences between all people. We may have different colored hair, eyes, or skin, but we have much more in common than we think, especially when it comes to our likes and dislikes, personalities, acts of kindness, and what's inside our hearts. Together we read books, completed activities, and created personal drawings of ourselves to learn these important concepts. The students realized it

is okay not to like the exact same things or be the same type of person as their classmates because our differences make us unique, special, and awesome! It would be a boring world if we were all the same. The students also discovered some new things about themselves, what they had in common with each other, and ways they could connect further with their friends. As Maya Angelou once said, "We are more alike, my friends, than we are unlike." In today's world, what a great reminder for everyone, young and old!



PHOTO BY ALYSSA WAGNER

The first and second-grade students showcasing their personal drawings. (Missing: the two first graders.)

They are not napping!



PHOTO BY MELANIE JONES

These middle school art students appear to be sleeping but are actually deeply engaged in blind contour drawings of their shoes. Blind contour drawing trains the eye and hand to work as a team, and it helps students to see all of the details of the object.

Science Class



PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

A fifth grader practices taking temperature and making precise measurements.



PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

Biology students are testing areas of our world for bacteria by swabbing and tracking the growth over the week.



PHOTO BY MIRANDA DAHLKE

Teams of students test their engineering and teambuilding skills in a group obstacle course challenge.



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9/11 Reflections

Students at Washington Island School have no memory of the terror attacks on 9.11.2001. To help them understand what it was like to live through that day, the Juniors interviewed adults in their school. The following are the reflections of the staff:

Mrs. Josifek: Mrs. Josifek was working at the WPS Center. There were TVs around them that always had CNN on. She remembers looking up and seeing the fire from the first plane hitting the building. Then as they were watching the TV she saw the second plane crashing live. She said her first thought was that a plane crash was really interesting but once the second hit she thought, "The US is under attack."

Mrs. Mann: Mrs. Mann was in 5th grade at the time. She was heading to music in between classes. While pass-

ing the office she noticed the front office ladies all huddled around a boxy TV. Nothing was usually on the TV so this drew attention from the class she was traveling with. She witnessed the events happening live on the TV and had to go to class all panicked. The teacher attempted to explain what was going on at that moment but had just about the same amount of information the kids had.

Mrs. Foss: It was very surreal, she was working at Holiday Inn, everything had stopped, and she had watched it on the tiny TV and had cried. She was very afraid and didn't think it was happening. As soon as the plane hit, it became real. She thought the first one was an accident, but the second one hit and everyone knew it was a terror attack.

Mrs. Kehren: She was in 8th grade, came to school, and the teachers had

the TV's on watching the planes hit the towers. She was in math and had stopped class to finish watching the second plane go into the towers. It was confusing, scary, etc. She talked about how it was nice to live on the island because there were no buildings to crash into.

Ms. J: She heard about the first crash and thought it was an accident at first. Then she arrived at school as the next plane crashed. All the teachers were standing in the teacher's lounge watching it on TV before school started. 9/11 was a very scary moment in her life.

Mrs. Krueger: She was in England where she was working as a nanny when the planes crashed. She was sitting with the mom of the house. Something came across the TV but they didn't understand what was happening. The mom told Zuska something really bad was going on and as they continued watching, they found out.

Mrs. Dahlke: She was 12 years of age in middle school gym class. Teachers pulled her into the cafeteria, and her principal was telling everyone over the intercom what was happening. She understood more when she went home because her parents talked to her about it, but she didn't necessarily feel connected or sad because she didn't know anyone at the towers or anything, and she was too young to fully understand what was happening. She was just surprised that this could happen.

Mrs. Jones: was in 6th grade After the first tower was hit her teacher rolled in the TV and they watched the news for what seemed to be all day. After school when she went home even though she was grounded her mom did not want her inside so she got on her scooter and rode around town.

Mrs. Cornell: was at the school working at the front office. After the towers were hit she went to the teacher's lounge to watch the news on TV with some other teachers. The school was receiving lots of calls from worried parents so they were letting kids go home if their parents would want them to. She says that she was also worried and confused about what was happening.

Mr. Sullivan: was a freshman in high school on his way to 2nd-period English class when the staff rolled in a TV and everyone watched the first tower on fire. The sight of the second plane crashing into the tower was surreal, and at just 14 years old, he didn't know how to process the attack. Football practice was canceled, and he and his friends were at a loss

for what to do. The following day, no one showed up for school. Homecoming, sporting events, and many shops were all temporarily canceled. Living in Milwaukee at the time, he drew parallels between people staying home and being scared during the pandemic, although the circumstances were much different.

When Ms. Wagner was asked what she was doing during the 9/11 attack she stated that she was in first grade and the students were told to go to the library where they pulled up the news coverage on TV. She was sitting on the ground surrounded by her classmates and teachers. She didn't understand what was happening but knew it wasn't good. Ms. Wagner also recalls older students and teachers crying.

Mrs. B. Johnson: remembers being in first grade art class when her art teacher turned on the news for them all to watch. It was a scary moment and felt like time stopped. She also recalls it being a tender and sensitive time for at least a year after.

Mrs. Grzelak: was student-teaching at Bayside Middle School north of Milwaukee. In her planning period the teachers were all huddled around the TV watching the planes hit in the teacher's lounge. They went on lockdown because they didn't know if there could be other types of attacks. Her husband was luckily not flying at the time as many people were stranded away from home. She just remembers the fear and what it felt like that day. The next days there was a sense of unity in the country.

Mr. Verboomen: Mr. V and his wife were living in Queidersbach, Germany where Jenni was in the Army and he worked for the Air Force. They had gone to Ramstein Air Force Base to the BX (base exchange) to get diapers for Morgen. When they were checking out there was an armed forces network that was running at all times and it showed that one of the planes had hit one of the twin towers. They thought it was an accident at first. When they saw the second plane hit they knew their country was under attack, they got off the base as soon as they could and it was good they did because the American military bases were on total lockdown right after they left.

Mr. Kehren: was in a high school social studies class watching the TV. He then went to football practice after school, and his coach said they might be called up to go to war. He wanted to join the Army anyway but went to college first because his mom wanted him to. He saw it as a calling card to enlist in the Army. He feared the adventure in the world was gone.

The Student Council Report

By Marleen EhrlichJohnson, Advisor with Pam Josifek

The sign in the high school hallway says, "Student Council, Come see what it's all about! Build leadership skills and confidence. Work with others to make an impact on the other students and staff in our school and the people in our community. Have a voice on student activities and issues. Earn up to two volunteer hours a year and up to ten if you're on Student Council all four years of high school. Write "Student Council" in that blank spot on your job, college, or military application!"

On Thursday, September 12th, interested Student Council members, some new and some returning from last year, were welcomed to an informational meeting by Mrs. Josifek and Ms. Johnson. Mrs. Josifek, who teaches middle and high school math is the new Student Council Co-Advisor to work with Ms. Johnson! Of course, Ms. Stoller's work with the Student Council the past two years was incredible, and she will be missed, but Mrs. Josifek is excited to work with the students and take on this endeavor and adventure!

Ms. Johnson started the meeting by saying, "Student Council is as good as we make it, and this year, let's make it great again! Start brainstorming and writing down ideas of activities you want to see happen

this year!" Then, she reminded the students of all of their accomplishments last year, all the compliments they received, and how proud they felt impacting the kids in our school and the people in our community!

During lunch on Thursday, September 19th, the students interested in becoming a Student Council Officer- the president, vice-president, secretary, or treasurer- will give speeches to the middle and high school students, including their thoughts on why they are interested in serving as an officer, what qualifications/experiences they will bring, and what goals they think the Student Council should set for this year? After all speeches have been heard, the students in 5th-12th grade will vote for the four students who will make the best officers this year.

Then, before the first meeting ended, Rita Valentincic brought up the idea of organizing a Seniors' Night at the next home soccer game on September 27th. This is a familiar event that happens in basketball, so the night would be to recognize and honor the senior who plays on the Soccer team, Bennett Isaacson-Krueger. Already, the Student Council members started planning and taking on responsibilities! It's going to be a great year!

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Back in the Shop

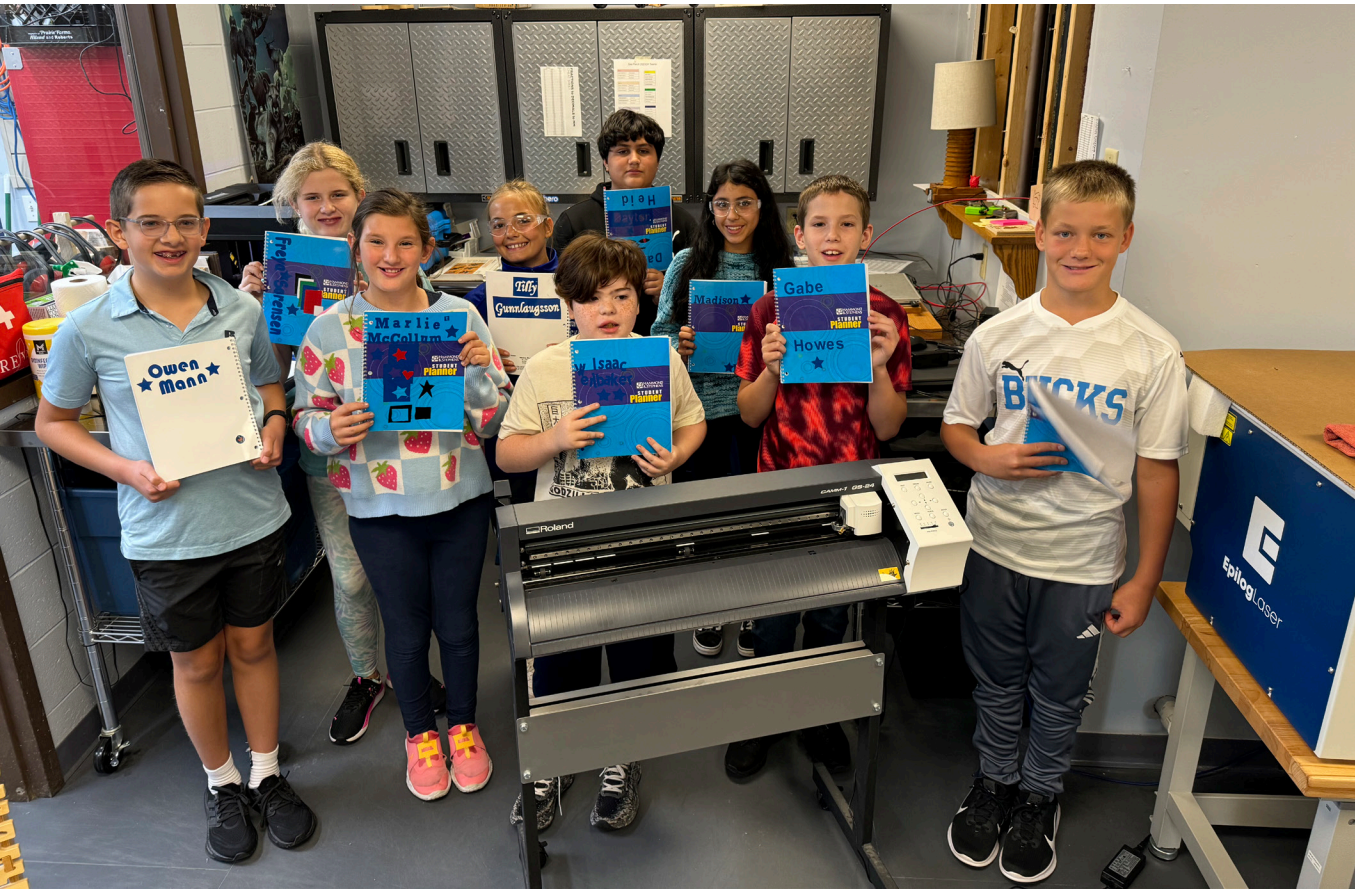


PHOTO BY MATT SULLIVAN

During the first days of school, students were introduced to the vinyl cutter and made name decals for their assignment notebooks.



PHOTO BY MATT SULLIVAN

5th graders learning shop safety and how to safely operate tools and equipment.

Dirt Biking with Friends

By Owen, 4th Grade

I went dirt biking with some of my friends, Zac and Devon. We went to the Merc to dirt bike because there is a nice field behind the Merc. Vroom! Vroom! Off we went. My bike was the fastest but also the hardest to ride because every time my hand came off the throttle, it turned off. It was really fun at first. We did some burnouts. Then, we went to the trail and went fast over bumps, but when we got to the very end of the trail, the worst thing happened. My bike died. We were all wondering what we were going to do. We had to push and push the bike all the way back to the Merc! When we went inside, we went into Devon's mom's office to cool down. We decided I could not ride my dirt bike for the rest of the day. Then, after we got some slushies and went back to the office to cool off for 35 minutes more, we went back out to take turns riding the other two bikes until the end of the day. It was a great day dirt biking with my friends.

So much to learn!



PHOTO BY MARLEEN EHRLICHJOHNSON

We may have a small class-- BUT WE HAVE SO MUCH TO LEARN! So far we've been learning map skills in Social Studies, including where we live on the planet, which hemisphere, which continent, which country, which state, which county, which town, and which road! Next, we're going to learn to write our full addresses on an envelope correctly and send someone a letter!