



Middle School Message

Monthly Newsletter of
Wissahickon Middle School

May 2019

Reading Olympics Highlights

Wissahickon Middle School competed with over 65 thousand other students in Montgomery County during the MCIU's Reading Olympics competition.

Three Wissahickon Middle School Teams, The Order of the Trojans, the Wizards, and the Spinecrackers, competed at Wissahickon High School on Monday night, April 8th and came away with two blue ribbons and one red for their efforts. But that is not the whole story, Reading Olympics requires commitment! Our students have been reading since last June when this year's list came out.

The students read from a list of 45 books that were selected by a committee of librarians, reading-specialists, and classroom teachers. They had to answer three rounds of 40 tough questions prepared by these professionals, requiring them to think as a group about books they read as individuals. It is amazing to watch our students work together to answer the questions, putting their hands into a circle if they read the book, and deliberating before determining and eloquently delivering the answer.

Special thanks to Wizards' team sponsors, Mrs. Smyth and Mrs. England-Gordan, Order of the Trojan's team sponsors, Mrs. Doyle and Mrs. Donohue, and the Spinecrackers's team sponsors, Mrs. Bainbridge and Mrs. Smith and to Mrs. Conger for coordinating all the teams. The students have been working since September reading and practicing in Trojan Day Homerooms for the main Reading Olympics Event, which encourages students to increase the quality and quantity of books they read for enjoyment. The Reading Olympics Program is based upon the belief that good reading habits form the foundation for a productive and successful life.

The Order of the Trojans and the Wizards received Blue Ribbons with a score of over 50 points and the Spinecrackers just missed a Blue Ribbon by 2 points to receive a Red Ribbon. Congratulations to all those that took part in Reading Olympics:

Wissahickon Wizards- Blue Ribbon: Erin Groarke, Jennifer Huang, Rachel Kim, Gina Lim, Solomiya Pankiv, Noelle Pelletier, Pelin Yuksel

Order of the Trojans- Blue Ribbon: Eeva Wargo, Ryan Coleman, Daniel Rao, Allison Meng, Ian Antonio, Benjamin Idrizbegovic, Kade Kniffen, Johann Prince, Rachel Park, Sydney Hettinger, Vanessa Ksiazek, Avery McCabe, Evan Bananis

Spinecrackers- Red Ribbon: Dina Bueti, Caden Carter, Saara Deshpande, Daphne Erdei, Alessandro Hidalgo Di Blasio, Kate Hussa, Abhiraj Nath, Jason Nguyen, Anika Rastogi, Alex Winkowski, Hanah Yum



WMS Girls Track shines at Penn Relays

Congratulations to our WMS Girls Track members who qualified for the Penn Relays last Friday. Eryn Lucas, Mila Jovanovic, Kenya Williams, Laila Cottom, and Jessica Palish travelled to the University of Pennsylvania's Franklin Field to compete with many other Middle School athletes and ended up taking 3rd place! This is the best any WMS Girls 4x100 relay team has placed at the Penn Relays. Despite the bad weather that day, the girls performed admirably. We are very proud of their efforts and accomplishment!



Yearbook Club Created Memories & Spread Kindness

The WMS Yearbook Club has worked diligently to create a fabulous catalog of memories for our school. Club members have taken thousands of photos, capturing as many special WMS moments as possible. This year's group has demonstrated outstanding leadership, teamwork and creativity, all leading to the creation of a wonderful book that we cannot wait to share with the school. Club members even decorated WMS's winning door for Random Acts of Kindness Club's door decorating contest. Yearbooks will be distributed at the end of the school year. Limited quantities are available for cash sales or online purchase on a first come, first served basis. Once we sell out of yearbooks, there will not be an opportunity to purchase more.

Applications for next year's club members will be available beginning Monday, May 13th and will be due Friday, May 24th. Any interested students should check their school emails, listen for announcements or see Ms. Shapiro in room 167 for details.



Student Dress Code Reminder

Now that we are in the midst of Spring and the weather is getting warmer, we would like to remind everyone of the WMS dress code. Students are reminded that they should be dressed appropriately for school. Shirts should not contain content that is vulgar or inappropriate for a school setting. Shorts/skirts/dresses should be an appropriate length and tank tops should not be open on the sides. Clothing should not be distracting to the educational environment. The complete dress code can be found in the Parent/Student Handbook which can be found at www.wsdweb.org under For Parents> School Resources and Forms.

Watch Principal Beth Bauer's Video Blog!

Mrs. Bauer shares information about PSSA testing and recent and upcoming events at WMS including the Annual Art Show on May 22nd and May 23rd!

[VIEW BLOG](#)

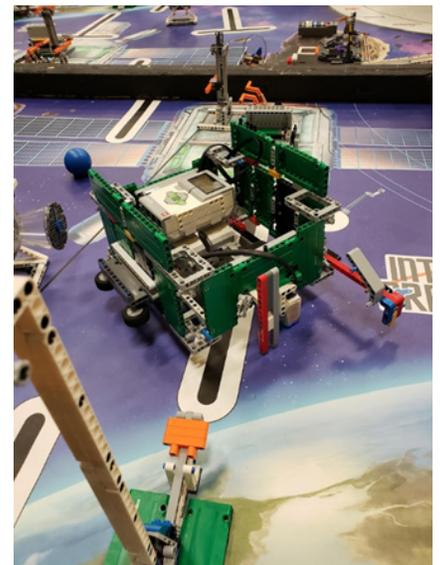
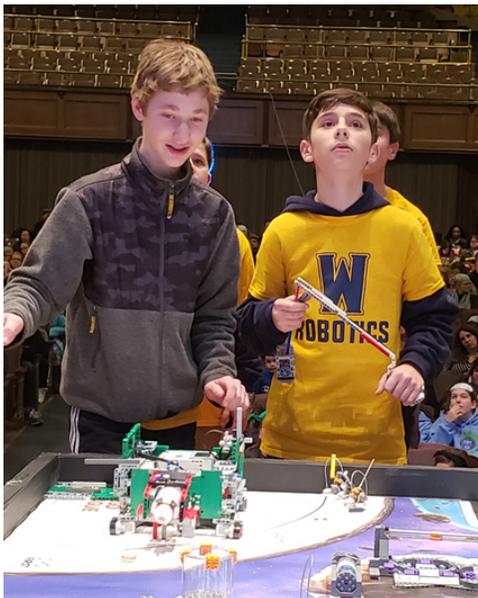
Great Year of Learning for WMS Robotics

The Wissahickon Middle School has had an exciting year learning how to build and program different types of robots while strengthening research and teamwork skills.

During the fall semester, three teams of 7th and 8th grade WMS students participated in the First Lego League (FLL) challenge. FLL is a robotics building, programming, and teamwork competition where hundreds of teams from the Philadelphia area compete using Lego EV3 robots. The WMS Blue, WMS Gold, and WMS Space Jaguars teams participated in local tournaments to show off their skills for this year's "Into Orbit" challenge. The basis of the challenge is that student teams have to design, build, and program their own robot to complete a series of space themed missions in a set time limit. The second part of the challenge included a project where students researched and developed innovative solutions to issues that astronauts may encounter on future trips through our solar system. Two of the teams advanced from the qualifier competition in December and competed at the FLL Regional Championship at the University of Pennsylvania and the WMS Blue team took home an award for FLL Core Values!

This spring, the other branches of the robotics club have been working hard as well. The 6th grade "spring training" students learned the basics of Lego robotics programming including accurate moving and turning, navigating with ultrasonic sensors, and building custom attachments to pick up and move objects with the robot. Some students even started to explore this year's FLL challenge, in anticipation for joining the competition team next year in 7th grade.

The 8th graders are meeting this month to learn how to build and program with Arduino, an open-source electronics platform that has an almost endless amount of applications. Some of the projects that the 8th graders will work on include building a theremin using a light sensor to detect hand motion and play different sounds, programming a LED to blink in Morse code, and using a thermal (heat) sensor to light up a series of LEDs depending on the temperature it detects.





Staff Spotlight

Christian Johnston, Math Teacher, Pride Team

Birthdate? July 11 (7/11)

Years at WMS? 26 years

Family: We have a blended family of six, including three sons, one daughter, my wife and me.

Favorite food? Wings & Fries

Favorite Super Hero? Batman

Favorite team? Anything Philadelphia

Favorite season? Summer

Favorite color? Carolina Blue

Favorite holiday? Thanksgiving – no gifts, just family

First job? I washed dishes at Doylestown Country Club when I was in 8th grade

Have you ever traveled outside of the U.S.? I have been to the Caribbean, Canada and Mexico.

Have you ever played an instrument? No, but one day I would like to learn the guitar and piano. I am hoping my math skills will help with learning the skills needed to play these instruments.

Hobbies? I really enjoy fitness. I go to the gym every day at 4:30 AM. I like to go golfing and I enjoy collecting baseball memorabilia.

WMS Summer Academy

Wissahickon Middle School will hold Summer Academy for students currently in grades 5-8 from July 1st to July 25th. This program will offer a blend of Math, Language Arts and team building activities. The Academy will be staffed by certified teachers and all instruction will occur at the Middle School. Transportation services will be available at the following pick-up/drop off Locations:

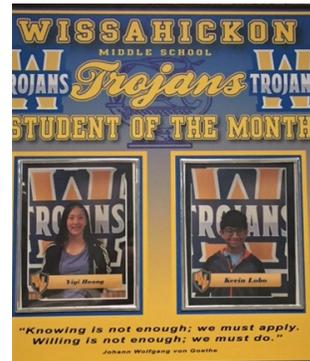
- Blue Bell Elementary School, 801 Symphony Lane Blue Bell (7:45 pick-up; 11:35 drop off)
- Ambler Borough Hall, 131 Rosemary Ave, Ambler PA (7:55 pick-up; 11:25 drop off)

This is an outstanding opportunity for students to reinforce learning throughout the month of July. You may register by calling Mr. Burke's office (215-619-8110 ext. 7020) and there is no charge or tuition for the Academy.

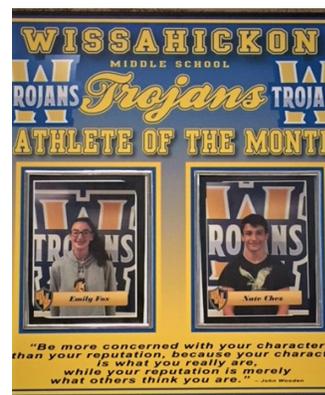
Overdue Book Notice

Every other week we notify students of overdue books via school email. We currently have 800 overdue books... twice the usual amount. Please encourage your students to return any overdue books to the library. Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Students & Athletes of the Month



This month, our two Students of the Month are Yiyi Huang, Grade 6 Mustangs and Kevin Lobo, Grade 7 Garnet. Yiyi and Kevin were selected based on their positive contributions to WMS, strong interest in learning, involvement in school/community programs and great character and citizenship.



Our two Student Athletes of the Month are Emily Fox - Softball and Nate Chez - Boys Track. Emily and Nate were selected based on their displays of good sportsmanship, respect, "team before self" mentality, commitment and demonstration of outstanding character, in addition to their athletic skill levels.

Please join us in recognizing these students' positive contributions to the WMS learning community. Their photos are on display in the Atrium hallway.