



Middle School Message

Monthly Newsletter of
Wissahickon Middle School

March 2020

WMS Strings Perform in Our Community

The Strings Department was excited to begin the school year by performing for our veterans at the WMS Veteran's Day Breakfast. On December 14, string students performed holiday selections at the Montgomery Mall along with the Select Chorus. Shoppers were treated to the sounds of the season as students played tunes and sang Jingle Bell Rock and Hanukah Dance. All string students performed in their winter concert at the Wissahickon High School on December 5 for family and friends, and then they performed again for middle school students on December 20 before the winter break.

As we near the end of winter, string students are preparing for their exciting spring performances. They will visit Artman Home in March bringing the joy of music to residents and staff. We are gearing up for the district-wide string concert on April 2 and the middle school spring concert on May 7. Students will also perform at the Ambler Library in May. Please join us for one of our entertaining performances!



Tik Tok



If you are parenting a middle school student, there is a very good chance that you have some familiarity with the social media platform, TikTok. In this article, we will attempt to demystify this app as it gains more popularity with our students. So, what is TikTok? Whereas most adults are adept at navigating Facebook, Twitter, and even Instagram, TikTok targets a younger audience, leaving many adults (and parents) in the dark.

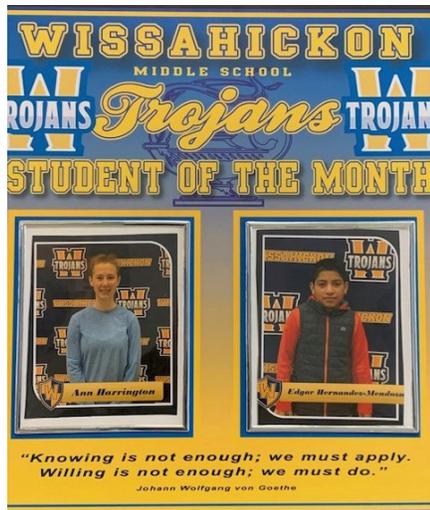
Here are some of the basics of the app your middle school student loves:

- TikTok is a free social media app that allows users to watch, create, and share videos. Videos are 6-15 seconds long.
- It has very popular features that allow users to lip-sync to popular music and sound bites, but it as with other social media platforms, also allows subscribers to connect with friends and admirers through likes, comments, and even duets.
- Users can also browse and interact with other users' videos, which covers a wide range of topics, songs, and styles. These videos are grouped by hashtags, which often correspond to challenges or memes.
- TikTok now boasts more than half a billion active monthly users worldwide and continues to grow.

As with all social media, young people need to proceed with caution. The appeal to create and share videos of questionable content is a concern that can have many negative, unintended effects, such as a damaged reputation and exposure to gossip and rumor. These issues have trickled into our school, as well. What can parents do?

- Be aware of the social media sites your child visits and check them regularly
- Explore privacy settings to stop certain interactions or to block comments
- Establish expectations for use, such as time limits

Students and Athletes of the Month



This month, our two Students of the Month are **Ann Harrington, Pioneers Team in grade 8, and Edgar Hernandez-Mendoza, Mustangs Team in grade 6.** Ann and Edgar 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 **Christine Aemisegger, cheerleading team, and Brayden Ryan, boys basketball team.** Christine and Brayden 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. Photos of these four students are currently on display in the Atrium hallway.

Inside the WMS Makerspace

Math students have been building with Knex to apply their number skills to real-world situations. Students were challenged to build a specific design out of Knex and then calculate the value of the creation using given values for the pieces. These activities help students practice the four C's of 21st century learning: communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking. They explore math concepts, like writing algebraic expressions, to practice their curriculum. Students are excited and engaged by these challenges and the opportunity to work in the Makerspace.



Athletics Update

Winter Sports

The winter sports season ended peacefully after seasons for Girls' Basketball, Wrestling, and Boys' Basketball that were not hampered by snow days or school cancellations.

The wrestlers concluded their season at the Montgomery County Athletic Association League Tournament, held at Colonial Middle School. Two Trojans, Tyler Prince and Justin Miller finished in second place in their respective weight classes. The team finished in fourth place overall. The League Tournament capped a successful season for the wrestling team as they finished with a 5 – 3 record in dual matches. At their end-of-season party, each wrestler commented about his/her personal improvement over the season, and also praised the camaraderie of the whole team.

The Boys' Basketball teams competed in the nine-team Montgomery County Athletic League season, and also had non-league games at Arcola Middle School and Spring-Ford Middle School. The 7th grade team ended the regular season with a 2 – 6 league record, and they were 2 – 8 for the season. Seventh grade hoopsters entered the League Tournament against Springfield. They started slowly and built up dominance on the court, winning 32 – 15. The victory advanced them to meet Keith Valley in the final playoff game. They beat the visiting Keith Valley team for an exciting finish to the season.

The eighth grade team ended with a 5 – 3 league record, and they were 5 – 5 overall. Close games were common to the eighth grade team as they lost by three to Abington, defeated Colonial by two, and defeated Sandy Run by four points. They entered the League Tournament as a number five seed against Abington, and lost a hard-fought game 57 – 51 to end their season.



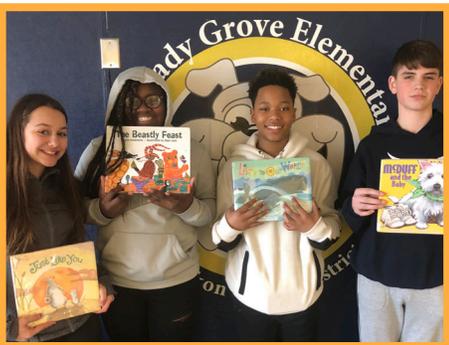
Spring Sports

Spring Sports for seventh and eighth graders are beginning. Students are encouraged to sign-up in Mr. Burke's office as soon as possible. If a student is interested in Baseball, Softball, Lacrosse, Track and Field, or Boys' Tennis, s/he needs a complete PIAA physical exam on file with the school. Athletes who have played in the fall or winter need to submit a PIAA form 7, which identifies any updates to a student's medical history. All forms are available in Mr. Burke's office, or on the Middle School webpage by clicking on Athletics and scrolling to the bottom of the screen. PIAA forms must be submitted to Mr. Burke's office before March 2, 2020, in order for a student to be eligible to begin the season on March 16.

Questions about sign-ups and eligibility may be directed to Mr. Thompson, Athletic Director, at kthompson@wsdweb.org, or by calling the Middle School, Extension 7014.

Middle School Students Celebrate Reading with Shady Grove Students

Students from Wissahickon Middle School and Shady Grove Elementary School celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday and Read Across America on March 2, 2020! Read Across America is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place annually on March 2nd, Dr. Seuss's birthday. Students from the middle school partnered with classes from Shady Grove Elementary School to celebrate their love of reading. The middle school students chose their favorite childhood book to read aloud to a kindergarten, first or second grade class. This celebration of reading has become a tradition that the students look forward to each year!



Staff Spotlight



Meet Leah Saleski
Child Specific Assistant

Birthday: April 6

Years at WMS: This is my first year here. Prior to coming here, I spent a year and a half at Blue Bell!

Favorite color: My favorite color is green.

Favorite food: Mexican food!

Favorite holiday: My favorite holiday is Thanksgiving because I love being surrounded by family, sharing stories and laughing, plus football.

Favorite movie: *Rudy*

Favorite music artist: Bob Marley

Favorite season: My favorite season is fall -wearing hoodies, having bonfires and picking apples.

Favorite superhero: Thor

Favorite team: Philadelphia Eagles

First job: In the summer, I worked as a custodian here at the middle school for the school district.

Traveled outside of the U.S.: Yes, I've been to Australia, Bermuda, and Bahamas.

Hobbies: I like snowboarding, kayaking, volunteering, going to concerts, listening to all kinds of music, and exploring new places in different cities.



Wissahickon on Stage

We are grateful to the Wissahickon Educational Opportunities Foundation (WEOF) that launched a fundraising initiative to support NEW LED stage lighting for the WHS Auditorium - our largest and most frequently used performance and meeting space!

Nearly 500 students at Wissahickon Middle School are enrolled in choral, band and strings classes and more than 100 students participate in the extracurricular theater program.

With the community's support, WEOF will help WHS modernize the lighting system to:

- Enhance our music & drama programs, award ceremonies, assemblies, parent & staff programs and other school & community activities
- Create a more enjoyable experience for our audiences
- Benefit EVERY Wissahickon student, staff & community member who takes the stage

[Learn more and make a donation: weof.org/wiss_on_stage](http://weof.org/wiss_on_stage)

Watch Principal Beth Bauer's Video Blog!

Mrs. Bauer highlights spring musicals, parent-teacher conferences, PSSA testing.

[VIEW BLOG](#)