

VIKING PRESS



Whitehall High School Newsletter

Volume IV Issue V

February 2014

February was in the heart of winter. There was plentiful snow all around, and schools had many snow days during this month. Students greatly anticipated mid-winter break and Valentine's Day. This was the month where love was in the air, and roses and chocolates were present in every store.

Tribute Triumphs

Writer: Sam Sawyer

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"You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."

~Wayne Gretzky

Chemistry Committed

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Pictured: Brandi Balzer taking a shot for Whitehall's Varsity Girls' basketball team.

Highlights

- First Viking Hunger Games
- Pictures of the Student-Led Play
- Snow Day Mod

Tribute Triumphs

By: Sam Sawyer

The odds were ever in Whitehall High School's favor the week of February 19 following Mid-Winter Break. After a long weekend and an added snow day, students resumed school with a *Hunger Games* themed spirit week. The spirit week was similar to Homecoming, the only difference being this one led to the big Whitehall vs. Montague basketball game. Each day consisted off a different theme in which students were encouraged to dress up. Students were supposed to return to school on Twin Tuesday; however the district was surprised by a snow day. Students instead returned to school on Wednesday and participated in Capital Wednesday where they were encouraged to wear bright and outrageous colors and clothing as it was done in *The Hunger Games*. Thursday was District Day, where each class was assigned a different district from the *Hunger Games* and encouraged to dress up to resemble that district. The *Hunger Games* Week ended Friday with Red Day, where students were asked to dress in all red to support their fellow Vikings in the game against Montague.

A *Hunger Games* Assembly was at the end of the school day on Friday, where two boys and two girls from each grade, as well as teachers from each grade, were able to compete in games. Throughout the spirit week students could put their names or a friend's name in for

a drawing at lunch; one time for free and a dollar per each other entry, for an opportunity to be chosen to compete in the games. Freshmen tributes included Danielle Jurcich, Andrew Tallquist, Julie Brown, and Jordin Patterson. Sophomore tributes were Caleb Tallquist, Alexis Snyder, Robby Jacobs, and Sophia Stevens. Juniors who competed as tributes were Allison Donahue, Ben Tindall, Hannah Moulds, and Tim Hiemstra. Seniors Jordan Duff, Janelle Uganski, Dylan Medendorp, and Megan Stout represented the senior class as tributes. Lindsay DeRose and Collin Kolkema participated in the games, representing the teachers.

During the assembly, the tributes participated in games including capture the flag, tracker jacker, and tug of war, eliminating the tributes until it came down to the winners; freshmen Danielle Jurcich and Andrew Tallquist. Capture the flag consisted running around the gym collecting small prizes until contestants were out. This game eliminated six students, leaving 10 left to partake in tracker jacker. This game consisted of tissue boxes filled with ping pong balls being strapped to each student. The students removed all of the ping pong balls from the tissue boxes without using their hands. This left only five tributes to compete. The games ended with tug-of-war, in which the freshmen won.

The assembly was created as a way to boost student support and activeness in the school, as well as a way for student council to earn money for the many events that they sponsors. A student council member suggested the idea and thought that it would be

something students would enjoy. The spirit week was a success to many and student council looks forward to continuing to do a second spirit week in future years. Donahue said, "It was a lot of fun participate in the second week, and to have the opportunity to represent my class as a tribute. I can't wait until next year!" Student Council advisor Jody Romine, who was in charge of helping student council put on a second spirit week said, "It was fun to see so many students participate, and I look forward to putting on a second spirit week in future years."

Overall, the *Hunger Games* spirit week was a great way to fundraise for the many events that are put on by the school, as well as get students involved. Throughout the week and at



Pictured: Student section cheering for their class tributes.

the assembly there was much laughter as well as good times shared among students. Many students would agree that the odds were ever in Whitehall's favor.

Chemistry Committed

By: Ashleigh Wilks

Emily Christensen and Kyle Baustert attended The Van Andel Education Institute Science Academy with Mrs. Deanna Cullen. They attended four sessions that began on January 23, free of cost. The

Van Andel Education Institute (VAEI) Science Academy is a nonprofit academic institution that offers educational programs for elementary, middle school, and high school students and teachers, as well as local community members. VAEI Science Academy is dedicated to advancing and promoting science education and increasing the number of students who choose to pursue careers in science or science-related fields.

Day one included teachers training and a program overview with hands on lab activities. Day two will include students as well as teachers, who participated in a program overview and hands on lab activities and participate with the VAEI scientists. Day three, the students participated in Journal Club with students and teachers as presenters. Day four included Journal Club and hands-on lab activities. The final day five students and teachers participated in Journal Club with their teachers, with final evaluation of what they have learned. The program ran all day from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The program is beneficial to students and teachers to better educate themselves in the science field. Kyle Baustert said, "The Journal Club experience at the Van Andel Institute is an eye opening experience of what careers in chemistry are like and different paths of science that can be taken." Both Baustert and Christensen enjoyed the club very much. They said it is a really nice experience to hear presentations and conduct experiments with kids their age who are also interested in chemistry. Cullen said, "Choosing only two students



was difficult because she wanted to open it up to any interested student. She decided that she wanted to pick students that might help incorporate what we do at Journal Club into ChemClub next year. Her goal is to bring this experience back to Whitehall and make it our own. We will be able to keep our eye on advances in chemistry and hopefully give interested students a peak into specific fields and careers."

Band Festival

By: Kelsey McGuire

February was an exciting month for Whitehall band students. On February 19 the band played a pre-festival concert, while festival was February 26 for middle school bands and February 27 for the high school band. The concert included the 7th, the 8th, and the high school band all performing what they had been practicing for festival. Festival is during the school day, so the concert was to show friends and family of band students what they had been learning.

Festival is a state music assessment to determine how band students are progressing. Each band performs three pieces: a march, a required piece acquired from the state list, and one selected by Matt Raab, the band director. There are five major categories that the students are judged on: tone, intonation, rhythm, blend and balance, and dynamics. Three judges grade on a scale of one to five, one being the best for overall performance. Judges help correct any problems the band may have. Each band is also tested on sight reading which is the ability to read music the students have never seen. The scores of the four judges are averaged, and the band is given that rating. The Whitehall band students prepared their three pieces of music for around one and a half months. The high school band's three pieces were "Bonds of Unity" by Karl King, "American River Songs" by Pierre LaPlante, and "Out of the Shadows" by Michael Sweeney. The 7th, the 8th, and the high school band each have different music they performed.

Senior Katie France said, "Our band was really well prepared, and it resulted in a good performance. We ended up doing an amazing job at sight reading as well." The high school band did extremely well at festival this year, and received all ones for their performance.

A Peachy Production

By: Leah Thompson

This year, Whitehall High School's student-led play was *James and the Giant Peach*. Seniors Kara Potter, Scott Murphy, and Alex Mark were the directors. Mrs. Lindsay DeRose and Mr. Greg Boughton were advisors for this production. The play was performed on Friday, February 28 and Saturday, March 1.

James and the Giant Peach is a children's story written by Roald Dahl. It is about how a little boy named James (Andrew Tallquist) finds himself living with his two cruel aunts, Aunt Spiker (Kaitlin Skoglund) and Aunt Sponge (Zoey Elliott), after his parents (Hannah Uithoven and Sky Christenson) are eaten by an escaped rhinoceros. He receives magical crystals from an old man (Stephen Ogden) that when eaten, wonderful things will happen to him. However, James trips and the crystals spill onto the roots of an old peach tree. An enormous peach grows, and the aunts take the opportunity to make it a tourist attraction and make money from tourists. One night while James is walking around outside, he goes into the peach and finds out there are other creatures in the peach. A grasshopper (Jack Zwemer), centipede (Jake Gillhespy), Earthworm (Cameron Chester), ladybug (Jessica Harris), spider (Carlie Bishop), glow worm (Allison



Pictured: Kaitlin Skoglund acting as a wicked aunt to James.



Pictured: Will Shields, Taylor Mikkelson, and Spencer McCormick act as a ship's crew.

Henry), and silk worm (Aminat Namazalieva) all ate one of the magic crystals and became enormous insects. While they are all in the peach, the stem connecting the peach to the tree breaks, and the peach rolls down a hill. It rolls right over James's aunts, crushing them. Soon, the peach lands in the ocean and floats away from the mainland. On their journey across the Atlantic Ocean, the peach encounters an English ship, cloud men, and sharks. They attach hundreds of seagulls to the stem of the peach, and they are lifted out of the ocean away from the sharks. All of the passengers stay safe while in the peach, and they soon reach New York City. The peach lands on top of the Empire State building. Citizens of New York help James and the bugs get on the ground. At the end of the story, there is a parade with James, and the insects. After the parade, the peach is eaten by many people, and the bugs each go their separate ways. The core of the peach is set up as a monument in Central Park, and it is James's home, where he lives a wonderful life.

The play was a success. Family, friends, and members of the community came out to support the cast. During intermission, the audience enjoyed some peach cobbler prepared by the food service staff. Despite some technical difficulties, the cast prevailed and had a fantastic show. Members of the



Pictured (left to right): Allison Henry, Jack Zwemer, Jessica Harris, Cameron Chester, Andrew Tallquist, Carlie Bishop, Jake Gillhespy, and Aminat Namazalieva.

play enjoyed putting on the play for everyone to see. “I enjoy seeing all of the happy little kids when we are done performing. It’s great making them happy,” said Uithoven. The cast also enjoyed the characters they got to portray. “I liked my character because I was able to make the audience laugh,” said Spencer McCormick. Also, they each had favorite scenes in the play. Tallquist said, “My favorite scene was with the cloud men because they threw hailstones at us.” *James and the Giant Peach* was a hit, and many students already cannot wait for the next student-led play.



Pictured: Emily Christensen, Erik Butzer, and Hope Orent acting as cloud men.



Pictured: Sarah Schmiedeknecht describes the play as the role of the Narrator.

Snow Way!

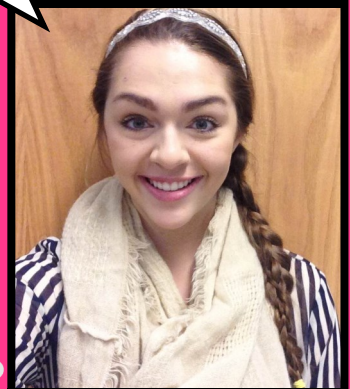
This year's remarkably cold weather has taken a toll on schools all over Michigan. Whitehall's 2013-2014 school year has a record of eight snow days so far. Because of the large amount of snow days, students and teachers have learned to be more flexible and hardworking. The snow days have also impacted other staff members and all of the winter athletics.

My favorite part of a snow day is getting to sleep in. Snow days have affected my school work because I cannot focus as well on my assignments the days we don't have school.

"The snow days and testing (ACT/MME) are cutting out a lot of class time. I'm postponing and/or eliminating some concepts. On snow days, I usually don't go back to bed. I'll watch *Hawaii 5-O* or *Walker, Texas Ranger* for awhile and then stop in to school for a bit."



Mr. Malbouef, Educator

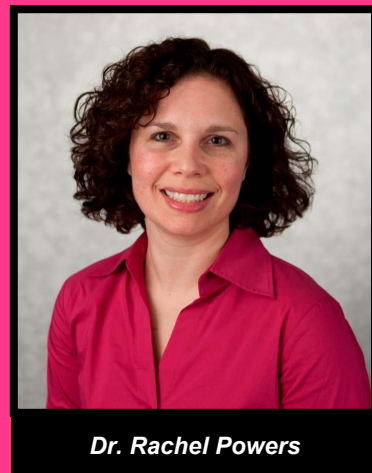


Nichole Sloan, Senior



Chem Club Chat

On March 12, 2014, Whitehall's newly established ChemClub is hosting a speaker, Dr. Rachel Powers, in the high school auditorium from 6:00 pm—7:30 pm. Powers is an associate professor of chemistry at Grand Valley State University. She will explain her research involving her structure based approach to investigating specialized enzymes called β -lactamases. She will also share her experience pursuing a degree in chemistry. The event will start off with Emily Christensen and Kyle Baustert giving a speech on their experience at the VanAndel Institute in Grand Rapids. Anyone from the community is welcome to attend the session.



Dr. Rachel Powers

This newsletter is produced by the Viking Communication Class of Whitehall High School. Students in grades nine through twelve learn various skills producing this newsletter. Writing, photography, layout, interviewing, and communication skills are just some of the advantages students gain from participating in this class.

VALHALLA



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