Vietnam Veteran Visits

On December 14, 2005, Mr. Chester Pike shared with 8th grade Social Studies students his experiences in Vietnam. Mr. Pike served in the U.S. National Guard in Vietnam in 1968-69.

As so many people who travel, Mr. Pike has a large number of photographs of Vietnam during the war. A number of them were downloaded into Power Point and then, assisted by his granddaughter, Kara Dorais and a friend, Michael Dow, Mr. Pike explained each of the pictures, adding many anecdotes about his time in the country.

Mr. Pike shared the remainder of his photo album and a couple of publications with the students. These publications were issued by the U.S. government specifically for those in the Artillery and for those who had served their tours and were on the way home. There were many good questions asked and answered ranging from the temperature on Christmas (120 degrees F) to the types of weapons carried.

A most sincere thank you to Mr. Pike, his daughter Mrs. Thompson (who organized and scanned the pictures) and his two assistants (who ran the computer) for a most informative program.
Parent Involvement Research

A summary of selected research compiled by Dr. John H. Wherry.

Studies find that students with involved parents are more likely to:

1. earn higher grades and test scores,
2. pass their classes, earn credits and be promoted,
3. attend school regularly,
4. have better social skills, show good behavior and adapt well to school,
5. graduate and go on to further education

• Families from all cultural backgrounds, education, and income levels can encourage their children, talk with them about school, help them plan for higher education, and keep them focused on learning and homework. All families can have a positive influence on their children’s learning.

• The research evidence is now beyond dispute. When schools work together with families to support learning, children tend to succeed not just in school, but throughout life. In fact the most accurate predictor of a student’s achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student’s family is able to: 1. Create a home environment that encourages learning 2. Express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children’s achievement and future careers 3. Become involved in their children’s education at school and in the community.

• When parents are involved in their children’s education at home, their children do better in school. When parents are involved at school, their children go farther in school, and the schools they go to are better.

• The family provides the child’s primary educational environment. Parent involvement is most effective when it is comprehensive, long-lasting, and well-planned. Involving parents in their own children’s education at home is not enough. To ensure the quality of schools as institutions serving the community, parents must be involved at all levels in the school.

• The more parents participate in schooling, in a sustained way, at every level—in advocacy, decision-making and oversight roles, as fund-raisers and boosters, as volunteers and paraprofessionals, and as home teachers—the better for student achievement.

SEVENTH GRADE SPANISH CLASS WRITES HOLIDAY STORIES

Before the vacation the seventh graders worked in small groups to write original holiday stories in Spanish. Each group had to use vocabulary that they had learned in Chapters 1 and 2 and they could choose to use some holiday vocabulary. All students worked hard and produced creative stories. When the stories were finished each group presented their story in front of the class by acting it out. Below is just one of the wonderful stories and two pictures of different student groups. Ask your student to tell you in English what is happening in the story below!

La Navidad de Mercedes

Written by Madelyn Maroun, Katie Hart and Derek Rowen

Es el día de Navidad. Hay una chica que se llama Mercedes. Mercedes se despertó y no vio regalos debajo del árbol de Navidad. Mercedes está triste y quería tener un elfo para la Navidad.

Mercedes le dice: “Mama, ¿dónde está mi elfo? No hay regalos de Navidad.”

La mamá le dice: “Lo siento. No tengo dinero.”

Ahora, Mercedes fue al Polo Norte. Mercedes vio a muchos elfos y renos. Mercedes buscaba Papá Noel. Mercedes no lo encontró a Papá Noel. Mercedes vio a Señora Claus y le dice: “¿Dónde está Papá Noel?”

Señora Claus le dice: “Papá Noel fue al trineo.”


Team unity is one concept which is reinforced through MA’s Base Camp. Pictured here are the Llamas decorating their flag/banner that is now displayed with others in the hall of the middle school wing.

Seventh Grade Spanish Class Writes Holiday Stories

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The Preliminary Competition of the National Geographic Bee has been completed. Those 8th graders who earned participation in the Final Competition were:

Class AB  Zachary Burrows, Morgan Diltz, Hayley Kretchmar (Alternate)
Class CD  Alisha Chico, Randall Schmidt, Samantha Bouchie (Alternate)
Class GH  Emily Burke, Chris Mitza, Mark Stephens (Alternate)

Congratulations to all who participated. It was a great competition!

The Final Competition was held on Thursday, January 5 at 2:30 p.m. in Room E-105. Results are announced in February Paw Prints!
Grades 8-12 band performed “The Carolers” to open the second half of the concert. This was followed by “The Christmas Song” and “The Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah. The 7th graders joined the rest of the students to form the Academy Concert band as they played “Oakwood Overture”. The jazz band, which included 8th graders, performed “Black Magic Woman” by Santana. The combined band and chorus, performed a medley of Christmas music, “Our Winter Wonderland” The MS chorus performed “Gaudeamus” and the select choir performed “Dashing through the Snow” and “Carol of the Bells”. The concert was a success and a good time was had by all.

Music Students Learn Guitar

Middle level general music students are finishing up a two-week guitar unit with in-class performances. All seventh and eighth graders learned and reviewed the A, E, D, G and C chords and eighth graders also moved on to Am, Dm, and F. The students also learned two strum patterns to play with their chosen songs.

Yin Yu Tang

At this time of the year, the 8th graders are studying Asia in general and China in particular. The Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts purchased a Chinese Merchant’s House in Anhui Province, China and transported it to the United States. The house was dismantled timber by timber, crated up, shipped to the United States and reassembled on museum property.

The house was opened to the public in June, 2003. On December 15, 2005, the students took a tour of the Yin Yu Tang, a virtual tour that is. The students drew index cards that had Southeastern Asian Countries on some and Southeastern Asian capitals on others. As the students matched their countries with their capitals, they found their partners for the tour.

The tour has small videos and audio narratives. We were able to look at various rooms of the house itself and take an aerial view of the town from which it came. We learned about the generations of the Huang family that occupied the house and viewed some of their possessions. We were told the procedures for dismantling and shipping the house.

The tour was a wonderful way to observe and appreciate a small portion of Chinese culture. The web address is <http://pem.org/yinyutang>. Check it out! 

Cartoon by Denise Malm
Eighth graders completed their annual probability unit in December. Students enjoyed the culminating project in which they designed carnival games. The games were engineered to be fun to play but profitable as well! Thanks to Mrs. Perry’s class, these math students were able to get first-hand feedback on their games.

At the end of the carnival, some of the games were donated to the PTA for use in their annual Holiday Fair. Evan Borrin, Scott Pepperman, Adam Gravelle and Chelsea Corliss volunteered a Saturday morning to help the PTA run some games.