

NAMS Gifted News

Nazareth Area Middle School

June 2008

Volume 3 Issue 3

Nazareth PACE Team Takes 1st Place!



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Special points of interest:

- Please check the Middle School Gifted Ed. Website for updated information. This can be accessed by going to the NAMS site, click on teams, specialists, then Mr. Smith's website. Or click: <http://teachweb.com/PA/NASD/bsmith/h0.stm>
- This edition's recommended website: <http://www.energyquest.ca.gov/transportation/electric.html>
- Scheduling Questions? Email Mr. Smith at: bsmith@nazarethasd.org

Gifted Exploratory Class Scheduling?

Current Middle School gifted students are aware that they may elect to take the Gifted Exploratory Class as a replacement for one of their "Diamond Area Band" special area classes. Parent letters regarding student decisions to elect this class for students moving to grades 7 and 8 were already mailed before the end of school with a return deadline of June 16. However, because the specific Diamond Band Classes, either Fine Arts or Tech. Ed., are not selected for grade 5 students moving to grade 6 until after the end of the school year, Parents of these students still must consult with their children to determine whether they wish to elect to take the 45-day Gifted Exploratory Class. The Gifted Exploratory Class meets every day for one

On Thursday evening, May 8, the Nazareth Middle School PACE (Pocono Academic Challenge Eighth) team defeated Stroudsburg 42-28 to capture first place in this year's scholastic competition! PACE is similar to the Scholastic Scrimmage where teams compete by attempting to answer general knowledge questions and use buzzers to "buzz in" if they wish to respond. This year, six teams entered the double elimination tournament: Stroudsburg, J.T. Lambert (East Stroudsburg), Bangor, Pleasant Valley, Weatherly and Nazareth. Nazareth team members were: Katie Fritchman, Matt Rohn, Matt Giamber, Emma Pilker, Leah Giralico, Erin Adams, John Martin, and team cap-

tain, Ryne Rozell. This was also the 4th annual competition for PACE and the first in which a Nazareth team made it to the finals.

The tournament was moderated by Mr. Robert Young who has graciously carried out this role since PACE began, and who is also a veteran of Scholastic Competitions as both an team advisor at the Middle School and High School levels. At Nazareth, PACE tryouts are open to any grade 8 NAMS student and are usually held in January. After narrowing down the field to eight students, team members practice about once a week until the competition.

In addition to the team trophy, this year's members were given PACE T-Shirts, Certificates of Participation, Team Photo, and perhaps best of all, an ice cream party. Thanks also to our own Mrs. Jane Loupos who acted as official time keeper for the finals, and to Nazareth's Pupil Services Director, Ms. Rosemary Montesana and Middle School Principal Mr. Robert Kern, for their overall support for the team.

period during one marking period. Class size is small with 6-10 students comprising a class. Students work on 2-3 small projects and one of which is "student selected." Past projects have been of various designs. For example, students have produced original videos, music, podcasts, PowerPoint, PhotoStory, and MS Publisher projects. There have also been various experiments, poetry, stories, plays, and artwork produced.

Students new to the Middle School should discuss this option with their parents and return the scheduling form to the Middle School as soon as possible. Please email NAMS Gifted Ed. Teacher, Mr. Smith, if you have questions. Parents of grade 7-8 students who still have not returned their forms should do so immediately to avoid scheduling difficulties in the fall.

Parent Volunteers!

This year, our gifted education program benefited by the assistance of several parent volunteers. Seventh grader Phoebe Wang's mother, Mrs. Yang, was kind enough to teach one of our grade six Gifted Exploratory classes some basic Chinese Mandarin words and phrases as part of the China Webquest unit. She helped the students with their vocabulary and dialogues, and very effectively explained the pronunciation of the Chinese tones. She also provided cultural information and was the chief editor of the China Webquest newsletters that the students produced. To conclude our China Unit, the students took a short fieldtrip to a local Chinese Restaurant. Although at first it appeared that transportation problems would prevent us from taking the trip, Mr. Gorrie, six grade student Brian Gorrie's father, volunteered to help transport the kids.

Also, as a wonderful addition to our 7th grade unit on Flight, Emma Parrish's father, who is a veteran pilot for American Airlines, stopped by and gave one of our 7th grade Gifted Exploratory classes a lesson on the aerodynamics of flight and even demonstrated how to do acrobatics on our flight simulator (see issue 2 of NAMS Gifted News for the complete story).

Eighth grade student Matt Rohn's mother also provided transportation when our student's needed to attend the PA Middle School Computer Fair Regional's Competition at Intermediate Unit 20. She also served as our assistance team advisor.

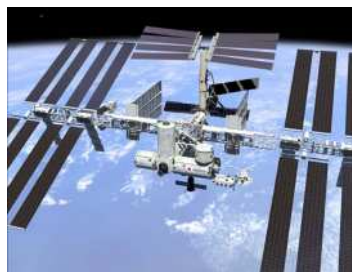
Parents, thanks so much for all of your help. The students definitely benefited by your efforts.



Our Chinese Mandarin Teacher-Mrs. Yang



There are really five Mandarin tones: high, rising, low-rising, high falling, and neutral.



Humans in Space-NASA Video Conference

How much water per day does an astronaut require while in space? In a microgravity environment, why does your head get puffy? Why do astronauts need to exercise regularly in space? Once in orbit, how does an aircraft safely return to Earth? To help our students better understand these and other questions, we arranged a video conference with NASA scientists and engineers as part of NASA's Digital Learning Network. This was a first for the Middle

School, and with the assistance of Technology Coordinator Mr. Steven Snyder, on April 18, our students made a real-time, audio-video connection with the folks from NASA's Glen Space Center in Cleveland, Ohio. Although the program was scheduled for about 50 minutes, due to the large number of questions from our students, NASA extended our time to almost one and a half hours!

In attendance were students Nathan DeRaymond, Tatiana Sampson, Zachary Fox, Erick Bittenbender, Johanna Bernsdorf, Ayomide Opeyemi, Kevin Garzillo, Ryan McMullan, Principal Kern, 7th grade Science teacher and project advisor Mr. Atwood, Tech. Coordinator, Mr. Snyder, Technology Application Specialist, J.D. Eates, and Director of Educational Technology, Mrs. Tracy Smith.

There was no charge from NASA for this conference and they also provided pre-post assessments and lesson materials. Due to the rising costs of fieldtrips, Mrs. Smith remarked that video conferencing may be one way to connect experts with students with little to no expense.

Great Solar-Powered Car Race!

As one of our gifted activity period projects, students constructed small solar-powered cars for entry into a solar-powered car race. Materials such as chassis, wheels, axels, motors and photo-voltaic cells were supplied from a purchased kit, but students had the freedom to incorporate their own design and to make modifications as needed. Although most of the cars were similar in appearance, they differed greatly in performance. In the race finals, 6th grader Michael Palmeri's car defeated Nathan DeRaymond's design in a photo finish. Congratulations to the other contestant's, Zach Fox, Johanna Bernsdorf and William Haunstein for their efforts.



Although it would be great to use solar power in full-sized cars, unfortunately, photovoltaic cells don't produce enough energy for a standard sized vehicle.