

Issue #1  
Winter Edition 2015

Written by *Purple Paw Staff*,  
Edited by Mrs. Reeves

# Purple Paw



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*Cortland City School District's Jr. High Newspaper*

## Time to Renew Rachel's Challenge

Does kindness matter? Is this even a quality that people notice and appreciate anymore? Well, it could mean the difference between making someone feel welcome or sending the signal that there simply isn't enough room for them at your lunch table, in your group project, at your party or in your school. Kindness doesn't take much and it certainly doesn't cost us a thing, but it could possibly mean more to someone feeling sad, alone, or rejected than we may know.

In this month devoted to making those we admire and cherish feel loved and appreciated while leaving out those we

"don't," why not make a pledge to treat others just a little bit better than we ever have before. After all, you never know when it will come back to you or when you'll need to rely on the kindness of others.

Therefore, let's remember the power of the golden rule and give what we expect in return. Let's truly commit to taking up Rachel's Challenge throughout our school and community to treat others the way we'd like to be treated ourselves: with dignity, respect and most of all, kindness.

We can all start with something as small as a smile or friendly gesture of hello or even some-

thing bigger like making friends with someone who is very different from ourselves, comes from another country or background or doesn't seem to have many "cool" friends. This only means that the person will appreciate and feel the value in your kindness all the more.

They say we should first seek to understand others or walk in their shoes before we hope to be understood... Along these lines, one of the best signs spotted off the highway this winter happened to say: "Be kind to each other, for kindness is always free."



## Creepy Creeps of Pilgrim Road Gives Students Creative Outlet

By Ella Wilson

The junior high put on a musical this winter entitled *The Creepy Creeps Of Pilgrim Road*. The show took place January 23 and 24 and was truly “creepacular.”

It turned out really awesome despite some surprise, last-minute casting changes and adjustments! Everyone gave it their all and the group’s hard work truly showed in the final performances...



Auditions were held Thursday, December 11 and Monday, December 15 from 7pm until 8:30pm. Rehearsals started in early January right after the holiday break and kept the cast extremely busy.

If you have questions concerning upcoming performances or where to find audition packets, you can ask Mr. Wells, who can be found in choir room 192, or you can check out the theater bulletin board.



**The cast of creepy characters included:**  
 Lark Stevens as Billy, Joshua Wickham as Sinbad, Jenna Saltsman as Skeeter, Merrill Storch as Sally, Leah Gesin as Nana, Megan Porter as Flora Lime-tree, Bella Cinquanti as Bertha, Chloe VanGorder as Princess Un Ravel, Tara McMahon as the Telephone Operator, Toni Marie Wilson as Henrietta Stonehenge, Gabby Rosas as Lullaby Jones, Morgan Zimmer as Dulcy Burnside/Clock, Neve O'Connell as Bunny Lang, Arieal Bowers as Lady #1, Karleigh Gohs as Lady #2, LaShay Damour as Lady, Kurt van der Veur as Mortimer Weird, Ella Wilson as Evangeline, Kristen Tasselmyer as Maybelle Belfry, Kaylee Seyfried as Taranatula, Kayla Nielson as Aunt Witchita, Nevaeh Amo as Gretel Nesselrode, Adrienne Homza as Photographer and Olivia Johnson as Cordelia Springs.

Photography courtesy of Isaf-Merkur.

## 8th Graders Take Manhattan By Storm & Ferry

*By Taylor Cowart-Hooko & Joshua Wickham*

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies trip to New York City was fantastic and a big success with 100 total students going. It was held Saturday, November 15 and was a one-day trip.

We had to get to the junior high around 5:15 in the morning and left school as soon as we took attendance. We arrived in the New York City area roughly at 9:35 am. At first, we went to

New Jersey. From there, we took a ferry ride to Ellis Island.

While we were there, we went to the Ellis Island museum and saw exhibits on immigration to America from all over the world. Second, we took the ferry to the island of Manhattan and walked to the Wall Street bull for some photo opportunities. Third, we went to the September Eleventh Memorial and Museum, where we saw building remains from

the disaster site and personal belongings from some of the victims that day.

Then we had lunch at an all-you-can-eat buffet located at the Buca di Beppo Italian restaurant. After that we went to Rockefeller Center. We traveled to the “Top of the Rock,” where we saw the sun set over the New York skyline, a perfect end to a perfect trip.



## Relay For Life Fights Cancer Head-On

*By Tess Engst-Mansilla*

Relay for Life is a club for anyone who is fun, helpful, and caring about the community and cancer survivors. This club meets every Thursday after school in room 166, Ms. Rinehart's classroom.

So far, we have been learning about ways to prevent cancer and doing fun activities like running the bake shop at the Neon Dance on Friday, November 21 and supporting the walkers at a recent breast cancer walk. We have lots of other cool things

planned too. For example, we had a Zumba party to move around and promote good health in January and a Coaches vs. Cancer basketball game that raised \$1,200 on Jan. 23.

There will also be some “battle of the teams” events happening in March, so we hope to see you at meetings. Don’t forget, the best way to prevent cancer is to educate others.





***"The event was a fun mix of our community, staff and students."***

--Ms. Catalano

Photography by Mrs. Jamie Brown



## Harlem Wizards Vs. Phenoms

By India Feliz

On November 24 in the Cortland High School Shafer Gymnasium, the Harlem Wizards took on the Cortland Phenoms, a team made up of teachers and coaches from Cortland Enlarged City Schools.

Despite a tough showing of skills, talent and grit on both sides, the Harlem Wizards still beat the C2G team by about a 10 point spread.

According to Ms. Catalano, "The event was a fun mix of our community, staff and students." Many thanks go out to Ms. Catalano, Mrs. Johnson and the rest of the Renaissance

committee for a truly amazing night!

In case you did not get to come out that night, you would have met an amazing player from the team. And if you had three or fewer unexcused absences, you were also invited to be a part of the Harlem Wizards Renaissance Rally earlier that school day during lunch periods when you got to watch a professional basketball player on the stunt team doing "his thing."

Thank you to our community, staff and students who bought tickets to see the game and came out to support the professional players, teachers and coaches.

# Syracuse Crunch Host French Club Night at War Memorial

*By Joshua Wickham*

As I approach the junior-senior high, I have a sense of eager anticipation growing inside, for it is the night of the big Crunch game...

When I arrive at

hour to get to Syracuse, this trip seemed to take 10 minutes. As we arrived in the city, a few students pointed out just how different Syracuse is from Cortland with its tall buildings and dense population. The school

inside. Big screens were displaying a countdown from 20 of the number of minutes remaining until game time.

After a very long 20 minutes, the game finally started. The announcer introduced each player of the Crunch as they individually skated out onto the ice, but barely even acknowledged the players on the opposing team, the Norfolk Admirals.

For a while the game seemed slow until an Admiral player slammed a Crunch into the wall, which caused a brawl between a cluster of players on both sides and ended with the two original players being thrown into the penalty box for two minutes.

The game continued at a steady pace until the Crunch shot the puck at the Admirals' goal and made it. The arena exploded with the shouting of Crunch fans and the big screens were filled with "Crunch GOAL!" That was the only goal for 3 periods.

When the next period started, the Admirals scored a goal

right away with the Crunch close behind, scoring a goal shortly thereafter. No one scored a goal for a while, until the Crunch scored another goal, making the score 3-1 in their favor.

After another intermission, it was the third and final period in the game. The Admirals scored a goal, then there were no goals and another brawl resulting in gear being strewn across the ice and multiple penalties. Near the end of the period, the Admirals scored again, so now it was tied, 3-3. The game went into overtime and then it was a matter of minutes before the Admirals scored to break the tie and win the game.

Overall, it was a fantastic experience. We got to see "the big city," an awesome game and lots of "hockey fights." We even got to have our group picture taken on the ice after the game!

By the time we arrived back at school, it was well past 11pm. When my parents arrived, I thought of what I would do next at home: dream about ice rinks, hockey sticks and announcers bellowing, "GOAL!"



school, the long yellow bus is idling nearby waiting to be loaded up with French Club students. When we were all situated, the final headcount was taken, and the long yellow bus pulled out of the bus circle, Syracuse bound!



Although it normally takes about an

bus slowed to a halt in front of the OnCenter War Memorial, where the game took place.

The lobby was large with ceilings so high they could fit two Shaquille O'Neal's inside stacked one on top of the other. Our group walked slowly through the turnstile as our tickets were collected. We walked passed several wax figures of military personnel ranging from the Revolutionary War to the Vietnam War.

We entered the arena through three sets of double doors and it was unexpectedly warm

## “Depression”

By Taylor Cowart-Hooko

**When you’re mad or sad for no reason, that’s depression.**  
**When you feel depression, you absolutely feel like you are nothing and nobody cares.**  
**If you are getting bullied at the same time, you also feel like nobody cares and you’re nothing.**  
**People can try to make you smile or even crack a joke.**  
**The last thing people can do is be kind and sweet to you.**

## Science Club Brings Cool, “Strange” Stuff into Focus

By Joshua Wickham

Do explosions make you happy? How about bubbly stuff? Goop? Fake blood? Then science club is the thing for you. It meets Tuesdays after school in Ms. Sundheim's room, 137. We blow stuff up, make slime, fake blood, and most of all, do science!

So far, we have tested the color content of leaves, made fake blood, made ooblech (liquid that turns solid when pressed), solved science department “crimes” or unsolved mysteries and made Alka-Seltzer lava lamps.

Ms. Sundheim is the founder of this grand group, with ninth-graders Jonathan Chu and Rose Hettich as co-founders. Jon Chu says, “Come blow stuff up. It’s fun!” At a recent meeting we discussed the idea of dipping old electronics into liquid nitrogen and shattering them in the near future...

## Junior High Students Shine in Regional Spotlight

This past week, 8th graders **Samantha Brafman, Tess Engst-Mansilla** and 7th grader **Lark Stevens** competed in the semi-final round of the Cortland Youth Bureau's annual spelling bee held in Homer on Feb. 11. Two out of three ladies, Brafman and Engst-Mansilla, will

now be advancing to the final round of the bee on Feb. 25 in the junior-senior high auditorium at 9:30 am. Great job, ladies. We wish you luck in the final competition!

In other school news, 7th grader **Sterling Smith** won the district-level competition of the National Geographic

Bee on Jan. 13 with the chance to win a \$50,000 college scholarship. Sterling edged out 8th grader **Austin Phillips** in the championship round. **Grace Call, Lark Stevens** and **Katherine Aumick** from grade 7 and **Kirkland Case, Sam Forrester, Daniel Ruggiero, Alex Ryan** and **Nick D'Addario**

from grade 8 all advanced to the final round of the competition. Students answered oral questions on geography in the first round of the 27th annual National Geographic Bee, sponsored by Google and endowed by “Jeopardy” host Alex Trebek.

Sterling and winners from other schools now take a written test and 100 of the top scoring students in each state will then be eligible to compete in the state geography bee on March 27.

