Eighth grade Science classes had a thrilling start to their school year this Fall as they each took part in the bottle rocket project. The materials for this project are simple: a 2-liter pop bottle, tape, and some cardboard. Students were instructed to make a rocket out of the bottle by cutting cardboard into wings and using one or two bottles. Students had to make measurements on the bottle for 0 mL, 500 mL, 1,000 mL, 1,500 mL, and a measurement choice of their own. Students next had to fill the bottles up to the lines with water and get ready to launch! With the help of the tech ed department, students used a pipe that would blow a gust of air into the bottle when the foot pedal was pressed sending the bottle, hopefully, soaring into the sky. After the students launched their rockets, each group created a PowerPoint presentation demonstrating their results.

Students were divided into groups ranging from one to four people and were assigned roles to in the groups which helped in forming a hypothesis about what they learned. My group’s hypothesis was that a rocket filled with 1,000 mL of water would go up the highest for a variety of reasons which we learned during the start of the year. Students were given about a week to build the rocket and prove their hypothesis. Final results and data for this project were checked and used to determine the distance that the rocket traveled in the air. Students used this data with their hypothesis and recorded the distance in their packets to create a variety of charts and a data table.

At the conclusion, students were full of opinions regarding the project. In my opinion, I loved the project and think that it was a great learning experience. Layla Killmeyer was quoted as saying, “I thought it was fun working with friends and classmates on the bottle rocket project.” Chloe Kemp thought, “Some launches were really good, unlike mine, which were quite ludicrous.” and Niki Gangadhar’s shared her opinion that, “It was fun, entertaining, and taught me how the water affects the distance that the rocket goes.” Overall, everyone enjoyed the project and the fun opportunity provided by their Science teachers!

**Art Club**

Do you like to paint and draw? Do you want somewhere to have fun while doing those things? If so, the our school’s Art Club is the place for you. Art Club is a fun after-school activity where you can express all of your artistic abilities. It offers many art-related activities, such as painting or drawing. Some of the pieces of art around the school were made by the kids in Art Club! They work on many different projects throughout the year, each extremely fun and different. The members meet on different days depending on what grade you might be in. However, all grades do meet immediately after school. For further information about the meeting times and days, email one of your art teachers! During a typical hour or so in Art Club, you might start out working on whatever project you started in that week. It could be something from painting to drawing or even scouting. Each project is unique in its own way, challenging you to try new mediums each week or day. Every time you meet after school, it is a great chance to make new friends. Many different people come to Art Club each week, making it easy to meet more people. In conclusion, Art Club is a great way to make friends and be creative outside of school. I personally believe that Art Club is a great program and many people should join in the fun!
Splash Into Winter!

With winter upon us the middle school fall sports have had their finale. Football, cross country and suddenly, you're left with free nights and after-school hours. Yes, it's great at first, but after the first week or two, middle school athletes tend to become bored and start to miss the challenge and competition of sports. Some start to feel out of shape and while you can definitely go running, do you really want to be outside in 30-degree weather or in the snow? Don't laze around this winter, hop in the pool and get in shape!

Of course, you're probably wondering how exactly you'll be able to swim in the winter. Doesn't water freeze below 32 degrees Fahrenheit? You're right, and your science teacher would be proud. However, all swimming doesn't have to be outside. Our very own high school has a wonderfully run indoor pool that has open swims at night for an hour where you can get some laps in. You can look up some great workouts for your night to get your heart rate up. Training like this can keep you in shape and ready for your next athletic season. If you feel that those laps just aren't enough, there are plenty of local clubs that you can join at any level. The best club around happens to be right here in Moon, the highly-praised Moon Aqua Club, with head coach Jeff Berghoff. You can also join the YMCA to get the exercise you desire. In the Moon Aqua Club and YMCA, the coaches can help you perfect your strokes and technique and keep you moving and grooving to be as healthy as possible. Your skill level is irrelevant. You'll definitely improve quickly. Swimming is the best type of cross training you can do.

In sports, you have so many opportunities to enjoy other people's company. Swimming is the same. Your team will soon become like family. In most sports, there can be some ridiculous drama (you know exactly what it's like). It's safe to say that you will never meet a mean, spiteful, or negatively-intentioned swimmer. If you start swimming and nothing clicks right away, that's totally fine. Swimmers tend to be shy at first, but after a while, you will see their friendly side. Nobody likes to work out alone, and that can make you unhappy. You won't want to do something you aren't interested in. Getting together with other kids your age to work out is a great way to improve social skills and physical fitness.

Maybe you have been looking everywhere for a sport and you just can't get into anything good. Maybe you don't know anyone in your favorite sport. Maybe you're not athletic at all and need something to keep you from wheezing up the stairs just getting to lunch! Fortunately, most swimmers will tell you that before they started swimming, they were the exact same. Take a look at the middle school swimming section of last year's yearbook. Find the owners of those smiling faces and ask them about their swimming career. Ask them about their pre-swim years. They likely were just as you believe yourself to be. Swimming is a great, laid-back sport that has a calming effect.

There are tons of ways to get yourself involved in swimming. This year, the middle school swim team is available to all seventh- and eighth-graders. Just get a physical and get to practice! The team starts up around March. Practices are held after school, commonly from three o'clock until five o'clock. Come join the wonderful world of the water and acquire some more amigos along the way. Create some unbreakable friendships and keep yourself healthy as ever by diving into swimming!
Holiday Gift Guide 2017

Ever wondered what the top gifts you can get your family this holiday season? Say no more because our newspaper staff had done their research to find the best gifts for everyone in your family for the holidays. First on the list, and commonly recommend on lists everywhere, is the Fitbit. These days everybody is trying to get fit so why not get a watch that can tell the time and tell you how fit you actually are. There are several other wearable technology, but name when it comes to how fit you actually are. That can tell the time and tell you how fit you actually are. Of course Fitbit is a common name when it comes to wearable technology, but there are several other options ranging in prices from companies like Apple and Garmin just to name a few. Another gift sure to be popular with the family this holiday season is the Amazon Echo. The Amazon Echo is a reliable speaking instrument that answers almost all of your questions and commands. This thing takes Siri to a whole different level. Maybe the Echo is a bit out of your price range, but many stores are offering its smaller and just as effective counterpart, the Amazon Dot, at greatly reduced prices. This piece of technology can be used for everything from playing music on demand and ordering product to turning on products plugged into its special wall sockets. In our research the third most popular gift this holiday season is the gift of entertainment and what better way to access that entertainment than with Amazon Fire Stick. This stick can stream up to 250,000 TV shows, movies, and cartoons. Also, you can watch a selection of movies that exclusive content to just those who subscribe to this service. This a perfect gift because you can get some quality bonding time with your family by sitting down and watching a movie of your choice. Of course there are several devices in this market too including the Apple TV and the Roku so do your homework and see which one works best for your family and your budget. In our opinion, these are the top three holiday gifts for this upcoming winter. No matter what gifts you think about picking up this holiday season be sure to have a great time with family and friends and remember that time spent with those you love is greatest gift of all.

Girls Volleyball

The Moon 7th and 8th grade girl's volleyball teams had quite a season. Both the seventh and eighth grade teams finished the season with an impressive 12-1 record. The teams not only have outstanding records, but the girls have a great time playing. You may be asking, why did these girls join the team in the first place?

According to eighth grade middle blocker/hitter, Molly Simmons, "I joined the team because my sister played before me and it looked like fun." Ashley Hudzinski, an outside hitter for the seventh-grade team, says, "I joined the volleyball team because I started having an interest in playing volleyball and some of my friends played too."

After being asked their favorite memories of being on the team, the girls had some hilarious stories. Bailey Maxin, seventh grade setter or outside hitter, says her favorite memory was, "blasting music and always dancing." Eighth grade setter, Maddie Moore loved, "every single practice and game, but my most favorite memory was when Abby and I fell asleep on the bus and we woke up to everyone taking pictures of us."

The end of the season was bittersweet for the eighth graders who are moving onto high school volleyball. Sammy Hahka, eighth grade defensive specialist, says, "I'm excited to play with different girls and also I will hopefully get better." On the other hand, Hahka says, "I'm going to miss all of my teammates and the opponents that we went against through both years of middle school volleyball." Everyone interviewed has confirmed they will tryout for volleyball next year.

The seventh graders are excited to move up to 8th grade and be on the court again. The girls agree that they most certainly do not regret their decisions to tryout for the team. Good luck next season to all!

English Festival 2017-2018

The upper and lower house English festival is kicking it into gear for the new year. Fifth and sixth grade students can participate in the lower house English festival club, and seventh and eighth grade students can participate in the upper house club. Students are assigned five books to read in the lower house and six books in the upper house. Over the course of a couple months, these students meet after school to discuss the books. In May, the lower house will compete at Seton LaSalle High School in a series of competitive events against other schools. The upper house will compete at Duquesne University. This is a great activity to be a part of, especially if you love reading! See Mrs. Gariti if you’re interested in joining!
Girls Softball

Softball season is right around the corner, and you definitely don’t want to miss out! Moon Area Middle School softball is open to any girl in seventh or eighth grade who enjoys the sport. Practices are a few times a week starting in the winter and games begin in the spring. On weekdays that there aren’t games, practice starts immediately after school. There are around twelve games a season, half home and half away. On away games there is an early dismissal around 2:15 pm. The bus ride is always fun and a good time for team bonding. The team is coached by Bill Komara, known as Coach K. He teaches techniques to increase your skill and he makes sure to put you on the path for success! During the season, you will make a great group of friends, improve your skill, and most importantly, have fun.

As you may know, the Moon High School softball team went to WPIAL state championships last year! With experience from middle school softball, you could be as good as the high schoolers with a lot of practice and commitment. Make sure you listen to announcements to make sure you don’t miss sign ups! If you plan on continuing softball in high school this is good preparation.

Upcoming Events

Winter Break—December 22, 2017–January 1, 2018
NO SCHOOL

Book Review

Apple Yengko knows what it’s like to be different. She has a weird Filipino nickname, she’s the only Asian at her school, and she’s obsessed with the Beatles instead of boys. But her life doesn’t truly fall apart until she finds out she’s listed on the Dog Log—the list of the ugliest girls in school—and her friends abandon her. Suddenly she’s a social pariah. The boys bark at her in the halls and the girls turn the other way. Apple dreams of escape and resents everything about her culture, including her mother. She’s desperate to get a guitar so she can run away and become a musician like her idol, George Harrison until she meets a new kid who comes to school. Apple is convinced that music and this boy can save her. And it might—only not in the way that she thinks. Will she be a future rock star, or friendless misfit?

Did you know *Blackbird Fly* was named one of the best books of 2015 by School Library Journal, Kirkus, and the Center for Multicultural Literature? It was a Junior Library Guild selection, SIBA Best Book of the South and Cybils Award nominee. *Blackbird Fly* was a Golden Kite Honor Book and received the APALA Honor Award for Children’s Literature. *Blackbird Fly* was based on the echoes of the author’s life. The cultural conflict was originally a subplot, but it eventually took over. Apple had a bigger story to tell than the one the author originally outlined. Erin Entrada Kelly was raised in south Louisiana, but now lives in the Northeast. In addition to writing MG, she’s published lots of short stories in places like Keyhole Magazine, Kyoto Journal, and TAYO. She’s a two-time Pushcart Prize nominee and was a finalist for the Philippines Free Press Literary Award for Short Fiction. She reviews non-fiction for the Library Journal and works as a writer and editor in suburban Philadelphia. Overall, I loved the book and would recommend this book to others.

Blackbird Fly

ERIN ENTRADA KELLY

Stay humble, be kind, work hard.