

Jr. Highlights

Mr. Christopher S. Stultz, Principal
Ms. Marilyn J. Walther, Assistant Principal

Parent Newsletter - December 2009
Mrs. V. Haney, Editor - Mrs. S. Grant, Publisher

The Principal's Perspective

Happy Holidays! The merry bells are ringing! I would like to start this edition of the Principal's Perspective with a big thank you! I thank you for the support that you have given to the school and the community. Our kids are often involved in so many charitable events at this time of year, such as the Love Basket, Shoes for Haiti, Children's Hospital, etc., and we know one of the biggest sources for that to happen is YOU! Those canned goods and non-perishable food items come off your shelves. We sincerely thank you!

I would like to thank all of those who came to our Veterans Day program. **Ms. Robyn Bailey-Orchard** and company did a tremendous job honoring and commemorating our troops. **Mr. Nevin Saylor** had the band ready to go for the presentation, and **Mrs. Mary Bender** had her students perform many excellent songs—they all did a wonderful job! We are blessed to have so many dedicated staff and students who gave their own time to make this event possible. Most of all, we are thankful for those who serve and have served in the military to secure our freedom. If it wasn't for them, we may not even have schools in this country. A sincere thanks goes out to all veterans!

As I write this, it is opening night for *Romeo and Juliet Together (and Alive!) at Last!* The cast and crew did a special preview for the school during our FLEX period, and what a terrific job they did. It will be a wonderful (and funny) production featuring a plot that all of our ninth graders can relate; they will be reading Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* before they leave our school!

I sincerely hope you have a terrific holiday season! We've been so fortunate with the November weather, but one thing we do know—the cold and severe weather is yet to come. Make sure you keep alert on those days when there are delays and cancellations. December will be a busy month, but I hope we can all take some time to simply enjoy our families over the holidays.

Chris S. Stultz

Highlights from the Assistant Principal

November was filled with many activities! We had a wonderful Veterans Day program presented to the students and members of our community. This was an extraordinary program focusing on the honor, duty, and sacrifice of our nation's veterans. Our drama department put on a spectacular performance of *Romeo and Juliet Together (and Alive!) at Last*, highlighting the amazing talents of our students. We also had another successful annual Love Basket Collection. I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to our faculty and students for participating in these worthwhile programs.

Our club program will begin this month. There are 32 different clubs available to our students, and clubs will meet once a month this year. Thanks to the faculty and staff for their time and efforts to make this program a success for our students.

The Character Counts theme for the month of December is **Compassion/Love**. This theme fits perfectly with the month of December as we observe the Christmas season. Many students have already been recognized this year for displaying good character. This is an inspiring tribute to our student body, and I am extremely proud of their efforts.

Our STUCO Holiday Dance is **Friday, December 11**, from 7:30-10:00 p.m. Dress for the dance is semi-formal modest dress, so no jeans please! Students will be informed of the dress code for the dance during morning announcements.

As we celebrate the Christmas season, I would like to wish you and your family a safe, peaceful, and joyous holiday.

Marilyn Walther



Up-to-Date Sports Information Available

The athletic department subscribes to HighSchoolSports.net, a Web service that publishes up-to-date scheduling information directly from our athletic office. You can access IJHS sports' schedules directly from the Indiana Area School District Web site, (iasd.cc then go to Junior High). This site permits printing of games schedules, direction, and more.

GET SCHEDULES by clicking on the *Schedules* tab at the top of the page. You can view a complete calendar of events. Games are color-coded: **Blue** = HOME and **Red** = AWAY. Click on different tabs to attain the following information:

- 2-Day – a list of events happening today and tomorrow.
- Week – a list of events happening in that week. You can also view the previous week or the following week's events.
- Month – a monthly calendar of all events. You have the option to select the Sport, Gender and Level you are interested in.
- Season – lets you choose a sport, level and gender. All schedules are printable for every team by clicking when the team schedule is displayed.

Clicking on any school underlined in **red** will take you to MapQuest.com to get directions to the school or facility.

GET SCHEDULE CHANGE NOTIFICATIONS via email or text message on your cell phone to let you know that a game has been changed, postponed, or cancelled. Complete the following steps to register:

1. Go to HighSchoolSports.net and click *My Account* at the top of the page.
2. First time users—click I'M A GUEST or JOIN TODAY. Current users—sign in using your user name (email address) and password and click *My Account* at the top of the page.
3. Complete your profile by filling out the required information.
4. Click the *My Teams* tab at the top of the page and choose the school(s) for which you would like to receive notifications.
5. Select the sport(s) and types of notifications you would like to receive for that sport by clicking the drop down arrows. You will receive a confirmation email.

We hope this service will keep you informed of any athletic schedule changes, as the winter weather months will be here soon!

Jr. Highlights is the newsletter for families of students at Indiana Area Junior High School. It is published monthly during the school year under the authority of the Indiana Area School District, 501 East Pike, Indiana, Pennsylvania 15701.

IJHS Forensics Wraps-up Season

The Indiana Junior High Forensics Team, coached by **Ms. Robyn Bailey-Orchard** and assisted by **Mr. Tony Versace**, wrapped up its successful season in the Five-County Forensics League with an excellent showing. The team won 16 ribbons in a field of over 150 competitors at Forest Hills on November 4.

All four of our speakers in the challenging Persuasive Speaking category took the top three places! **Molly Masterson** again won first place with a PERFECT score. **Isaac Mastalski** and **Tyler Wang** tied for second, and **Alexia Akbay** placed third. In Poetry, **Nyla Numan** also had a PERFECT first place score, and **Willa Black** placed third.

In the Impromptu category, **Frannie Hanna** won Indiana's third blue ribbon of the tournament, **Matt Holuta** placed fourth and **Jem Bailey-Orchard** placed fifth. Drama competitor **Vrenda Soni** took fifth place.

In Prose, **Kelly Greene** placed third and **Ashley Hill** placed fifth. In the highly-competitive Informative Speaking category, **Austin Jasper** placed second, **Paul Birch** placed third, and **Peter Short** finished seventh. Duo-drama team **Tiffany Bray** and **Emily Lauber** improved to fourth place. What a grand finale for the Forensics Team!

ESL Family Night 2009 a Success!

Thursday evening, November 12, dozens of ESL students from our district, including seven from IJHS, participated in our annual ESL Family Night gathering at Eisenhower Elementary. The district is committed to parent outreach and provides this opportunity each year for families to get together and enjoy viewing their students' work. All of our ESL students submitted work for display or did a live presentation. **Luisa Branco** read a storyboard from a book called "In My Family" about Hispanic family traditions. **Kevin Zangl** displayed an original comic strip. **Yan Xu**, **Fiona Xu**, **Kaya Schmidt**, and **Shouq Alharbi** submitted compositions. **Dion Dong** played guitar with **Mrs. Maria Versace**. Many families brought traditional ethnic food dishes to share with everyone. The evening was fun and enjoyable for all.



Dion Dong and **Mrs. Versace** entertain at ESL night!

Accelerated Reader (Motivational Program)

Students are very actively engaged in the Accelerated Reader computer-based program. Our glass-enclosed bulletin board on the 3rd floor is updated every Wednesday, and students look forward to checking out the newest members of the “Points Clubs.” As of November 17, **Cole Rosenberger** distinguished himself by earning an astonishing 301 pts!

Five students have become members of the “200-Point Club,” ten students are now members of the “100-Point Club,” and twenty-six students are now members of the “50 Plus-Point Club.” We have had 155 seventh grade students take and pass tests using the program. The Accelerated Reader Program helps assess students’ abilities to comprehend the reading material they have chosen. We recently added another 44 new tests, and students are already taking tests on those additional titles.



Top readers so far include:

Cole Rosenberger	301 pts.
Stephen Kopczyk	277 pts.
Paul Birch	263 pts.
Brandon Griffith	263 pts.
Chris Kang	253 pts.
Priya Soundararajan	210 pts.
Jacob Grata	174 pts.
Layne Sheldon	159 pts.
Derek Yoder	140 pts.
Dylan Rinehart	133 pts.
Tianshi Wang	124 pts.
Payton Smith	110 pts.
Brian Waryck	104 pts.
Ryan Watters	103 pts.
A. J. Shellenbarger	101 pts.
Michael Kahle	100 pts.



Character Counts at IJHS!

Students displaying positive character traits were nominated by their teachers and recognized by our Character Counts Committee. Students demonstrating outstanding qualities in **October** were:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Alan Ackerson	9	Steven Hancock	9
Alexia Akbay	9	Olivia Stossel	9
Travis Berry	7	Yan Xu	9
Courtney Blystone	9	Fiona Xu	9
Tyler Cousins	9	Chyenye Yeager	8
Ashley Grycko	8		

IJHS Collects Food for the Love Basket

Our students, faculty, and staff participated in the Love Basket School Collection Campaign in November. Students brought in items to determine which homerooms would signup first for clubs to jump-start the event! Students kept bringing in items to earn a delicious and nutritious breakfast. Students also had an extra incentive to see Mr. Stultz don a turkey suit and play music if our total met 2,250. We are pleased to announce that the collection brought in **2,375** for the emergency food bank of Indiana County. This number tops the most ever brought in for this important community service! The highest contributing homerooms were: **Mrs. Holly Rougeaux’s** (9th), **Mr. Scott Mossgrove’s** (8th), and **Mrs. Karen Lowman’s** (7th). These winners received a nutritious breakfast on Tuesday, November 24, in recognition of their efforts.



Vocal Music News

County Chorus

The 2009 Indiana County Chorus Festival was held on Friday, November 20 and Saturday, November 21 at Marion Center High School. Students rehearsed together on Friday and Saturday; then performed an afternoon concert on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. in the Marion Center High School Auditorium. Students auditioned to be selected for this event. Representing IJHS were: **Jessica Bell, Paul Birch, Patrick Edwards, Alexis Elgin, Frannie Hanna, Brandon Griffith, Sloane Healey, Abbi Henry, Ashley Hill, Olivia Kimmel, Thomas Nakrosis, Robyn Nicewonger, Vrenda Soni, Payton Smith, Savanna Smith, Ashlee Steiner, Alexa Strong, Valerie Varner, Laura Werner, and Collin Yackuboskey.** Congratulations and best wishes to these students.

Holiday Concert

Seventh Grade Chorus, Young Women’s Chorus, Young Men’s Chorus, and Vocal Ensemble students have been busy preparing for upcoming performances. All Chorus and Vocal Ensemble students will be performing in the **December 16** Holiday Concert at 7:30 p.m. This program will be held in the Indiana Junior High Auditorium. All are welcome and admission is free. As we did last December, the finale for this program will be a combined choir performance of the *Hallelujah Chorus*. The audience is welcome and encouraged to participate in this piece, and music will be provided.

HOMWORK REQUESTS

Homework requests should be made through the Guidance Office with Mrs. Connie Smyers at 724-463-9718 before 9:15 a.m. Homework is only gathered after a student has been absent for at least two days. Please do not leave requests on the attendance voice mail.

Orchestra's Winter Holiday Concert

On **Thursday, December 10**, the Indiana Junior and Senior High School Orchestras will present their annual Winter Holiday Concert. The concert will feature the Indiana Junior High School String Orchestra and the Indiana Senior High School String Orchestra. The program will conclude with the Combined Indiana High School Full Orchestra and Indiana Junior High School String Orchestra. The concert will take place in the Indiana Junior High School auditorium at 7:30 p.m. and admission is free. Come and enjoy the musical sounds of the holiday season!!



STUCO News

Last month student council achieved its best profit ever from the Craft Show clearing over \$2,000. Without the help of all STUCO members and **Mrs. Joy Behr**, this could not have been such a positive fundraiser.

We would now like to hear from the students as to what we can purchase to make our school a better place. Our most recent purchase, the marquee, outside the school has been a great addition. Please give suggestions to STUCO members or **Mrs. Lisa Kinter**.

This month, STUCO has been busy planning its Holiday Dance for **December 11**. The theme for this year's dance will be "A Night in New York" ...save the last dance for me! STUCO is trying to create a Broadway atmosphere for students to enjoy.

Semi-formal dress is required. For boys, a shirt and tie would be great, but a collared shirt is fine. Girls are permitted to wear spaghetti strap dresses; strapless dresses are not permitted UNLESS a cover up is also worn or clear plastic spaghetti straps are sewn to the dress.

As always, if in doubt, it is probably not acceptable for the dance. Top Dog Productions will provide the music, and early requests can be given on the Top Dog Website. The password is iasdjh. We hope to see everyone at the holiday dance!

Attending an Activity at IJHS?

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need assistance at an event, please make your needs known to **Mr. Stultz** or **Ms. Walther** in advance. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate you.

Attendance—Key to Academic Success



Please note: When a **pre-approval form** is issued to a student, it is his/her responsibility to obtain the proper signatures and return to the attendance office before the absence. Partially completed and late forms are not acceptable.

Holiday information... Anyone planning a family **trip over the holidays** that will require students to miss school must notify the attendance office **at least one week before the absence; two weeks notice is requested for extended absences over three days.**



Parents or guardians must write a **note explaining the reason, location, and dates of absence.** Students should present this excuse at the attendance office before homeroom (7:30 a.m. - 7:40 a.m.).

Religious Holidays... Excuses for religious holidays should be presented to the attendance office **at least one week in advance** in order for them to be pre-approved.



Testing Days... Appointments requiring dismissals from school should not be scheduled on standardized test days or during final exam days.

Appointments during the school day... Parents requesting dismissals for students during the school day are expected to **keep such requests to a minimum** and are asked to **follow our established procedure.** A written excuse should be provided and contain the student's name, reason for the dismissal (medical, dental, legal appointment, funeral etc.), time of the dismissal, and time that the student is expected to return. The student should present this excuse at the attendance office before 7:40 a.m. An excuse from the doctor, dentist, magistrate, etc. should be provided when the student returns from the appointment. Students are allowed two hours for local appointments. Students should be in school for as much of the day as possible, and arrangements should be made to pick students up a short time before the appointment and return them to school as quickly as possible. Dismissals not following this procedure may result in unexcused absence time.

TARDY/HALF DAY ABSENCE . . . Students arriving between 7:40 and 9:15 a.m. will be marked tardy. Most tardy arrivals are unexcused, and a discipline plan is in place to deal with excessive tardy arrivals. Students arriving after 9:15, but before 12:30, will be marked as being absent for 1/2 day. **Students must arrive to school by 9:15 a.m. in order to participate in any sports or other school-related activity.** Students dismissed from school before 9:15 and not returning to school will be assessed a full day's absence and may not participate in sports or other school activities. **Students arriving late from doctor, dentist, legal appointments, etc. must provide an excuse from that authority.**

Students and parents are reminded that when a student receives an unexcused/illegal absence for any reason and for any portion of the school day, including "failure to produce a written excuse" to homeroom within three days of the student's return to school following an absence, the student receives a "0" for the work missed.





IJHS School Store Special!

The IJHS School Store has Indiana hooded sweatshirts on sale for \$19.95 until the end of 2009! The original price is \$23.75, so this is an excellent deal! **These sweatshirts make great gifts for the holidays.** Sweatshirts come in black, red, white, and gray. Lettering choices include: 1) INDIANA or 2) INDIANA Indians with the Indian logo. Both choices are embroidered on the left chest side. We have adult sizes only – S-M-L-XL. If you are interested in purchasing a sweatshirt or other items from our store, please stop by during our hours. We are open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays before school from 7:30-7:40 a.m., 10:40-11:35 a.m., and 12:00-12:30 p.m. For further information, call **Mrs. Janice Brocious** at 724-463-8568. (Note: Colors and sizes are limited to store stock.)



December 2009 – January 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 JH/SH Orchestra Concert @ JH 7:30 p.m.	11 STUCO Holiday Dance 	12
13 	14	15	16 PTSA 6:30 p.m. Choral Concert 7:30 p.m.	17 Group Photo Day 	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Holiday Break Begins	25 Merry Christmas!	26 
27 	28 Holiday Break	—————▶			31 January 1 Happy New Year!	2
3	4 Return to School	5	6	7	8	9