

Cougar Campus News

Important Dates:

March 24 Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.)

March 25 ½ Day of Student Attendance

March 26 Parent/Teacher Conferences (8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)

No Student Attendance

March 26 Last Day before Spring Break

April 5 Classes Resume

April 24 Prom (Bobak's Signature Events)

April 28/29 Prairie State Achievement Exam (Grade 11)

From the Desk of Dan Goggins:

Two weeks ago I received a letter from the state superintendent recognizing Plainfield South High School for an Academic Improvement Award for 2009. Academic Improvement Awards are given to schools across the state that have made substantial gains in performance on state assessments over the last several years. Only forty five high schools in Illinois received this recognition. Additionally, I received communication last week that we received Special Recognition for being one of the Top Ten Most Improved High Schools. You can view all recognized schools at the following website: <http://www.ilhonorro ll.niu.edu/index.asp>.

Certainly we are excited to receive these honors. However, positive results on the PSAE (Prairie State Achievement Exam), which is a combination of the ACT (American College Test) and Illinois Work Keys assessments, is only one indicator of success for our school, there are many others. We gather quantitative and qualitative data in a number of different areas in order to gain a clear picture of our successes and weaknesses as a school. I am proud to report that much like the positive trends we are seeing on standardized tests, we see similar trends in attendance and graduation rates, Advanced Placement scores, grade point average, discipline, and

parental involvement. In his book *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, Jim Collins describes the need to rigorously assemble and track progress on output variables and to drive for even higher levels of performance in order to make a distinctive impact over a long period of time. We aspire to do the same. Did you know the cougar is in the top ten (just like PSHS) of most popular school mascots? In case you haven't heard, It's good to be a cougar!



MATH DEPARTMENT



Congratulations to the PSHS Math team for an outstanding performance finishing 2nd place at the ICTM Regional Competition on February 20th. Special recognition goes to the calculator team: Jorge Barrios, Kelly Bishop, Tom Kodron, Moey Mirabelli, and Mike Ciric. The 2 person team of CJ Schei and Eric Vos took 2nd place and Robert Koulakes placed 3rd overall in the individual Algebra I competition. Our state qualifiers are Ray Farias, Jerry Estes, Vince Park, Jack Strand,

Ashley Vos, Emily Vondriska, Cac Connor and Robert Koulakes for their first place medals in the eight person team competition and the team of Jon Resler and Brian Amelio, who placed first in the oral presentation competition. Other state qualifiers will be announced after the results from the state competitions have been compiled. This was a great effort by the entire team.

Mrs. Singler's geometry honors classes calculated the height of our common's ceiling using indirect measurements and right triangle trigonometry. They calculated from the groups samples to be on average 16.7 feet.

"A mind once stretched by a new idea never regains its original dimensions."

- Anonymous

STUDENT SERVICES

Student Services will once again be home to CAREER ROUNDTABLE 2010, March 15-19.

The theme is Bridge to a Brighter Future: Empowering Cougars in Career Choices.

Over twenty-five business professionals have

volunteered to meet with a group of interested students in the College Career Center, second hour through sixth hour in a roundtable format. This event is highlighted each year for all sophomores, juniors and seniors with an emphasis on education to ca-

reers. Registration forms are available in Student Services.

In addition, job shadowing applications are available for students from their counselors.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Social Studies Department is very proud of one of its own. Mr. Steve Jeretina has obtained a \$5000 grant to pay for registrations for AP students that register to take any of the following AP Tests: Biology, Calculus, Eng. Lang, Eng. Lit, European History, US History, Spanish, and Government. His hard work can potentially save our kids over \$100K in college savings. Great Job Mr. Jeretina!

ART DEPARTMENT

PSHS art students participated in the Scholastic Arts Competition and Art Show at Downers Grove North High School on January 23rd. The students did a terrific job and won 34 awards in all. This is the most successful that Plainfield South has been in the 7 years that we have participating.

GOLD ART PORTFOLIOS: Cassie Irizarry Julie Kitzer Wade Schemmer

PHOTOPORTFOLIO

GOLD: Lea Perez

DIGITAL ART:

Gold: Julie Kitzer (2) Wade Schemmer Cassie Irizarry (2) **Silver:** Alex Garcia Stephanie Knudsen Julie Kitzer Cassie Irizarry

DRAWING: **Silver:** Lauren Marquez (2) **Honorable Mention:** Emily Shul-law Keith Feldman Marissa Luheck

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Gold:Lea Perez (4)

Silver: LeaPerez Daniel Park

HonorableMention:

Dan elPark Michael Santini LeaPerez

PAINTING:

Silver:PhoenixHarris

HonorableMention: NathalieHerrera

CERAMICS&GLASS

HonorableMention:

Tatiana Diaz(*ceramics*)

All GOLD winners advance to National competition in New York.

CHESS CLUB

The state Chess Tournament was held on Friday, February 12th and Saturday, February 13th at the Peoria Civic Center. PSHS chess team member John Freeburg won an IHSA medal for finishing in 9th place out of 130 players at sixth board.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Look for these exciting texts :

English 9: To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

English 9 Honors: A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens

English 10: The Secret Life of Bees by Sue Monk Kidd

English 10 Honors:

The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck

American Literature II:

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

English Literature II:

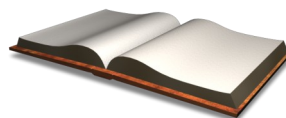
The Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad

11 AP: Pygmalion by George Bernard Shaw

Contemporary Literature II:

Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri

12 AP: The Age of Innocence by Edith Wharton



What we want is to see the child in pursuit of knowledge, and not knowledge in pursuit of the child."
--George Bernard Shaw

DEPARTMENT NEWS



"Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world."
-- Albert Einstein

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

Deutsche Klassische Musik

German 3 students did a project about classical music and German composers. They wrote a biography about a German composer and gave an oral presentation in German. They also shared a piece of music from their composer, which was a great opportunity to listen to and share the rich and varied tradition of classical music in Germany, and to learn about the lives of such famous composers as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig von Beethoven, and Richard Wagner, to name a few.

On Friday, January 29th, the PSHS Spanish Club, in conjunction with ESL students, sponsored a Baile Latino (Latin dance). This event was the first of its kind and was a huge success! The music was graciously provided by DJ Fiestas Varela and music was played in Spanish and English. Close to 100 students (and chaperones!) had fun dancing all night to cumbia, bachata, merengue, and salsa. Highlights included a choreographed dance performance, a bachata dance lesson, and a dance contest with prizes. Spanish Club was also able to raise \$67.31 for Haiti relief by donating \$.50 of every ticket sold and collecting other donations from students

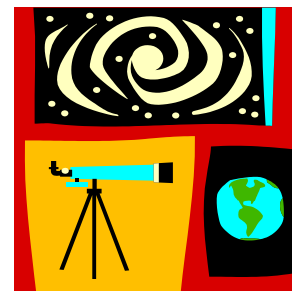
Mr. Fox's Spanish 4 classes are currently studying the Mexican custom of Day of the Dead. Celebrated the first and second of November, Day of the Dead is the combination of indigenous, pagan practices with the Roman Catholic practice of All Saints Day. The students will be creating and displaying an "ofrenda" honoring the life of a past loved one. These "ofrendas" include sugar skulls, paper flowers, and "papel picado" (made and decorated by students). They may be seen in the Media Center during Foreign Language Week, March 1 through 5.

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Congratulations to the Cougar Science competition team, participants in the WYSE (Worldwide Youth in Science and Engineering) Smart Challenge offered by the University of Illinois' School of Engineering, hosted locally by the University of St. Francis On Friday, February 12. Thousands of students from across the nation participate in the multi-disciplinary Smart Chal-

lenge annually. The South team competed in English, Biology, Chemistry, Math, Physics, and Computer Science. High scorers from South's team included Tom Kodron, Brian Amelio, Mike Holler, Britany Turner, Hubert Bilan, Jorge Barrios, Jon Resler, CJ Schei, Rebecca Piechur, Zach Simmering, Marie Hallberg, Kariana Weis, and

Robert Koulakes. Great job Cougar Scientists!



Foreign Language Week “Spread Your Wings, Learn a New Language”

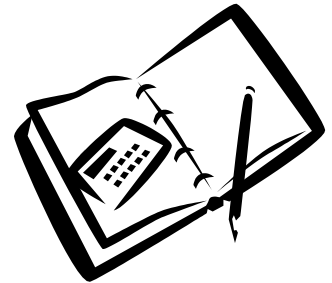
The World Language Department at Plainfield South High School sponsored its annual Foreign Language Week from March 1st–5th. The theme this year was “Spread Your Wings, Learn a New Language”, and the focus of the week’s events was on the foreign languages taught at PSHS: French, German, and Spanish. Leading up to and during Foreign Language Week, students enrolled in foreign language classes participated in a variety of activities promoting the study of foreign language. Before Foreign Language Week officially began, students began preparation by creating posters in their classes for a contest with the theme “Spread Your Wings, Learn a New Language”. Post-

ers adorned the hallways of the school throughout the week and winners of the contest received a prize. There were also signs in French, German, and Spanish labeling common areas of our school building. Students made locker signs identifying themselves as foreign language students. In addition, the display case by the main office exhibited flags, regalia, art, and other items from many different countries.

One event that was sure to be a highlight of the week was the Foreign Language assembly which was presented on Wednesday, March 3rd by the French, German, and Spanish Clubs. All foreign language students were invited to watch a performance of

bedtime stories in the various languages along with an English narration. Members of the French, German, and Spanish Clubs also promoted participation in foreign language clubs by handing out prizes to students in foreign language classes.

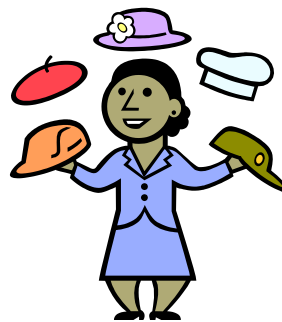
Each language was specially promoted on a specific day (Tuesday – German, Thursday – French, Friday – Spanish). Music in the language of the day was played before school and during the passing periods. Students learned short phrases in the language of the day as well as other interesting cultural tidbits



PSHS Media Center Host to “Careers Without College”

The Media Center, in collaboration with the CTE Department, sponsored a “Careers Without College” Fest on February 19th. The purpose was to expose our students to career options that are available at Joliet Junior College. The college provided

instructors from The Technical Department of JJC to explain and answer student questions as students moved among various booths and exhibits.



"The only person who is educated is the one who has learned how to learn and change."
-- Carl Rogers

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

BRAIN RESEARCH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

August 2001 Study published in the Annuals of Behavioral Medicine

EXERCISES increases growth of brain cells in hippocampus (part of the brain involving learning & memory), which slows with stress hormones

EXERCISE increases blood circulation (oxygen & glucose) to brain

Increases breathing and heart rate = more blood to brain

Increases energy production with waste removal

IMPROVED MEMORY, LEARNING ABILITY, CONCENTRATION, and ABSTRACT REASONING

Increases EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING (planning, organization, ability to multi-task)

Research performed by Jon Ratey, Clinical Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School

EXERCISE increases CEREBRAL BLOOD FLOW, spurring cell growth

EXERCISE stimulates the PRODUCTION of a protein called BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor) - "MiracleGro for the brain"

Promotes neuroplasticity, which enables brain cells to be trained to a different state and to take in new information

Helps prime the brain for learning by helping person stay focused, alert, aroused, and less fidgety

EXERCISE improves FOCUS & ATTENTION

EXERCISE decreases STRESS & ANXIETY

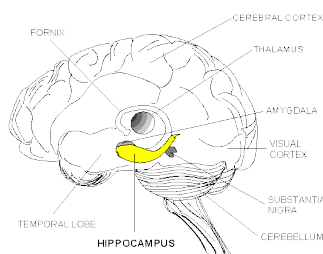
EXERCISE improves MOOD

EXERCISE improves MEMORY in old age

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Ratey, Jon. (2008). Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain. Little, Brown, and Co.: NY. www.jonratey.com

Medina, John. (2008). Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School. Pear Press: WA. www.brainrules.net



ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Congratulations to the PSHS Literary Magazine and Club! *Metamorphic Expressions in Blue and White* received a rating of EXCELLENT from NCTE (the National Council of Teachers of English). "A total of 425 schools entered the 2009 NCTE Program to Recognize Excellence in Student Literary Magazines" (NCTE letter of recognition). Only 17 of the 425 schools received a rating of excellent. Hoorah Literary Cougars! For more information about this recognition program

please visit <http://www.ncte.org/awards/student/PRESLM>.

What is *Metamorphic Expressions in Blue and White*? Our magazine contains the artwork, poetry, short stories, essays, and even musical scores written, composed and drawn by our own Cougars. The members of the literary club work to gather and preview any and all submissions. As a group, the submissions are reviewed and then submitted to the magazine. The magazine offers a tremendous

first opportunity for a young author or musician to be published.

Students, staff, and the community are welcome to purchase copies of the magazine each year. The literary club usually maintains some copies from the previous year that are also available for purchase. Please see Ms. Brown or Ms. Kukulinski with any questions or concerns.

Students of the Month:

English: Emily Yuill, Amanda Hernandez, Patrick Carlock, Cynthia Varela; ;

Math: Ambar Marin, Qudasha Brooks, Julian Lodi, Ricardo McCauley

Science: Tamara Murdock, Tony Overhiser, Jenifer Cancino, Adrian Villegas

Career & Technical Education: Nicole Fulton, Ana Barrios, Cynthia Yescas, Ben Deresinski;

P.E./Health/Dr. Ed.: Jose DeJesus, Danielle Ball, Elizabeth Truhlar, Nick Eskeli Orozco, Jaclyn Sweeney

Social Studies: Allison Portz, Deonte Lang, Emily Kunzendorf, Emily Ezzo

Student Services:

: Alexis Sime

**World Language/
Fine Arts:** Yoseline Huerta, Jonathan Giblin, Mercedes Mick, Danielle Berger