8th Grade Creative Writing Staff

March 6, 2026
Volume 1, Issue 4

What's New at NMS?

MS. GUTHRIE'S KIDS "JUST DANCE"!

By Brynn Sellers and Londynn Clifton

We recently went back to the classroom with Kaitlyn, Aiden, and Maddie.
This time we danced to a bunch of cool songs. Keep reading to see how these rockstars performed.

First, we danced to a freeze dance song. When the monster said dance, you dance! But, when the monster said freeze, you had to stay frozen until the next direction. This was really fun to do with them, even the teachers joined in. Although Kaitlyn moved the first time we had to freeze, she caught on quick! Maddie was jamming too. Aiden was cooking when it came to the dance part. He showed us lots of cool moves and looked like a statue when we had to stop!

Our next song was Baby Shark. Everyone was killing it with all the hand motions. Kaitlyn's grandma shark was the best of them all. Aiden liked to sing along to the daddy shark part. His hand movements went with the beat. I think Maddie's was really getting the baby shark part down! It made it so much more fun when everyone was singing!

This one everyone will know... YMCA! Aiden knew this song almost word for word. His moves were fire, and Kaitlyn was doing exactly what the dancer on the screen was doing! Maddie was getting the hand motions down. Kaitlyn was also doing so well with keeping up with all of the moves, even Brynn and I had a hard time changing so quickly!

Our last song was Blue (Da Ba Dee). This is one of Aiden's favorite songs. He always requests this song and it is pretty catchy! We all had a blast going with the moves. Aiden knew all the words to this song too! Kaitlyn was jamming with us and was having a blast jumping up and down. Maddie may not have been jumping around as much but she was really getting her moves going.

Although Jarret was sleeping he would have had so much fun! Hopefully he can join us soon!
Brynn and I had so much fun and can't wait to go back for the next adventure!



Ms. Guthrie's kids are always active learners!

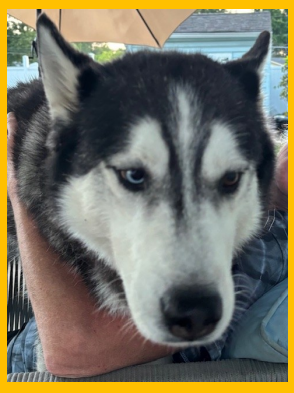




The "What's New" staff would like to give special thanks to Mrs. Chapin for filling in when Mrs. Bever is away.

Running the NMS office is a very difficult job, and Mrs. Chapin makes it look easy.

When you see Mrs. Chapin, be sure to say hello and thank her for her dedication to the students of Norwalk Middle School.



Ivan, official Husky of "What's New?"

THE BACKUP

An Original Story by Layla Koch

Yesterday

It was the day before the big race. Everyone in the house was buzzing with excitement. My older brother, Lucas, was preparing to compete in the State Championship track meet. Last track meet, he stunned everyone by running an astounding two minutes flat for the open 800 meter race. "I'm going to do even better at state. I know that I have a real shot at winning first place." Well, at least he thought he did. During his shakeout run, one of his teammates accidentally tripped him. His ankle twisted underneath him, injuring him enough to where he can't run. Or walk, for that matter.

Lucas came home with two of his friends, who were helping him walk. His face was twisted with pain.

"Lucas! What happened?" my dad said as soon as he saw him. My mom just stood there and gasped.

"I fell! Duncan tripped me on a turn, and my ankle bent all sideways and-" He cried out in pain. My mom ran over to comfort him. Personally, I was trying not to laugh. He's always been a bit of a drama queen in his own way. I was so sure it was really nothing...but it wasn't nothing. He truly could not stand by himself, and everyone knows he would never back down from competing in the state meet. I could tell Lucas was crushed. You could see it in his face, he already knew he just wasn't going to be able to compete. I felt really bad about wanting to laugh.

"Maybe if we call the trainer now, and ice it and wrap it-" my mom started.

"No, no. I can't. I can feel it. I need a cast and recovery time. Recovery time that I don't have." Lucas interjected. My parents shared a look. They knew it too.

"I just feel terrible. This is the first time Roosevelt High has had a track athlete competing in any 800 meter race in years. Now there will be no chance of bringing home the gold medal." Lucas sighed. I felt bad for him.

"Wait, Dawson, what was your fastest open 800 meter time?" my dad asked.

"Um, I think it was two minutes and two seconds. Why?" I asked. My dad and brother looked at each other, then back at me.

"That's a state qualifying time." Lucas said. I looked at him.

"Yeah, so?" I asked.

"So, you could take my place as Roosevelt High's representative at the meet."

I gave him a blank stare.

"What? No! I would get smoked!" I shouted.

"No you wouldn't!" Lucas said.

"Besides, I'm not registered to compete anyway." I said. It was my only comeback.

"Actually, you are." My dad held out his phone. I glared at it.

"Doesn't matter, I'm not going." I said.

Today

I'm at the track. I don't know what made me come, but I decided to. I just had a good feeling about it this morning. I hear the announcement for open 800 meter runners to line up at the starting line. Well, I guess I'm doing this.

LANDON WAITE

By Ryker Crumrine

I interviewed Landon Waite, and he said his favorite subject is Gym because he is athletic. The way he overcomes a problem is by asking teachers or his peers for help.

I asked him how he prefers to learn, group, solo, or partner. He said partner work because it helps him have another peer for help. I asked what he's hoping to accomplish this year, and what he's accomplished up to now. He said honor roll in the 4th quarter and he said he has accomplished no Ds on his report card.

I asked him to describe a goal he has for the next school year and why. He said he wants to make the honor roll for all 4 quarters because he wants better grades compared to this year. His favorite part about school is lunch because he can talk to friends. Landon Waite is one example of a great student and there are so many others in this building!



Landon is a great friend and teammate.

DID YOU KNOW?

1. An octopus has three hearts.
2. Some turtles can breathe through their butt.
3. Wombat poop is shaped like a cube.
4. Humans' ears never stop growing.
5. Our tongues have unique print patterns, much like our fingers and toes.
6. Sharks have existed on planet Earth for over 400 million years. That's longer than the oldest evidence of trees.
7. Sea otters hold hands while sleeping to avoid getting separated.
8. The average person blinks about 28,800 times every day.
9. A shrimp's heart is found in its head.
10. It rains diamonds on Jupiter and Saturn.

MS. GUTHRIE'S KIDS…KARAOKE SUPERSTARS!

By Londynn Clifton and Brynn Sellers



Londynn and I went down to room 511 to do some karaoke. We were all jamming out, even the teachers joined in at times! This was honestly one of the most fun times we have had all school year!

The first person who sang was Aiden. He sang "Blue (Da Ba Dee)" by Eiffel 65. I've never heard this song before, but it was very catchy. Everyone was dancing and laughing. Aiden did a great job with all the words. Even though the words were on the screen, he hardly ever looked at them. I don't know what this song came from or where it came from, but it was great.

Londynn and I sang next, after some careful consideration we chose, "How Far I'll Go" from Moana. We were a little nervous at first, but after we started going it was so much fun! Everyone made us feel so welcome and they even joined in at times. There were a couple parts where we had to look at the screen and then we started going a little too fast, but we were just getting into it! This was so much fun because it was honestly just SO fun!!!

The last song we sang was "22" by Taylor Swift. We sang this with Maddie and she was so good! Londynn and I messed up a couple times, but Maddie knew all the words so we followed her lead! She didn't just know the words, but her voice was amazing!

This was so fun. I've never really done actual karaoke, but this was a great first time! Even though we messed up a couple times the kids and teachers in room 511 made us feel so welcome!

A FUN TRIP TO ORLANDO!

By Emma Holbrook

I recently took a trip with my family to Orlando, Florida. I went to all three Universal Parks (Island of Adventure, Universal Studios Florida, and Epic Adventure). Epic Adventure just recently opened.

Island of Adventure has six parts: Suess Landing, The Last Continent, The Wizarding World of Harry Potter: Hogsmeade, Jurassic Park, Skull Island Reign of Kong, Toon Lagoon, and Marvel Super Hero Island. In every Harry Potter park, there are interactive wand spots and live shows.

Universal Studios includes The Wizarding World of Harry Potter: Diagon Alley, Minions, Simpsons, and the Fast and the Furious. Universal has a lot of kid-friendly rides as well as more intense roller coasters for older kids and adults. My favorite rides were either Velosacoaster or Stardust Racers, which are both coasters.

One of my favorite parts of the trip was going to Mardi Gras. There were different food stations and a parade that was amazing! It was so fun, because the parade participants threw bead necklaces and by the end of the day, I had 30 of them.

The new park, Epic Universe, has five worlds. Included are Super Mario World, Dark Universe, How to Train Your Dragon: Isle of Berk, Celestial Park, and The Wizarding World of Harry Potter: Ministry of Magic. My favorite parts of Epic Universe were meeting Toothless and Hiccup, as well as all the different rides.







MRS. PIETRANGELO

By Emma Holbrook

Mrs. Pietrangelo has been a teacher for 23 years. She likes scrapbooking, watching her kids
doing sports, and spending time with her family whether it's playing games or watching movies.

Something embarrassing she has done is she wore two very different shoes to a regular school day.

She has a husband and two kids. Her husband is named Sam. Her daughter Ava is in 7th grade. Her son Ian is in 5th grade, and they have a guinea pig named Mollie.

The best parts of teaching in her opinion is getting students excited about learning, building confidence in her students, and watching them grow throughout the year.

When she was thinking about becoming a teacher she always wanted to teach social studies to kids. The advice she has for students wanting to be a teacher is to shadow different teachers in the school district at different grade levels and different subjects.



Mrs. Pietrangelo is highly respected and beloved by her students.

ADVANCED ORCHESTRA COMPETITION WAS AN INSTANT HIT WITH NMS STUDENTS

By Dhruvin Bhatt, Connor Hoffman, and Ryker Crumrine

This is the NMS 8th grade orchestra. They are a very exceptional class. The students that went to the Honors event were the best of the best in the class. They are some very good students and did an exceptional job in the event, just like they do in school.

Aubree McFarland said the Honors Festival was fun and really chaotic. She said the Norwalk kids did really well and sounded great. She said the other schools were unprepared and could have been more prepared. She said that her favorite part was the bus ride and eating. She also said, “They were selling pickles for $1.” The hardest song she said was Jupiter because of timing and dynamics.

Julian King said that the concert was really fun and he liked the breaks. And when I asked him about how he thinks Norwalk performed as a whole, he said that we were some of the best at the event. He also said that the other schools could have done better and should have practiced more. His favorite part of the honors event was the actual concert and seeing how good we actually performed. And then he said that the hardest song in his opinion was “Tangerine Rag” because of its fast tempo and the large amount of practice needed.

Laney Schlotterer said, “The day was long, but it was fun to talk to the other schools’ students.” She thought the students from Norwalk did well. And the director was so impressed! She thought the students from the other schools didn’t sound as good as ours. But on the second day they sounded better. Her favorite part of the event was the actual concert, and she liked hearing us improve. Lastly, In her opinion, the hardest song was Jupiter because of the timings.

Parker Good said the day at Tiffin was very crowded and fun. He thought that the students from Norwalk did amazingly well, and were the most prepared out of all the schools. And he thought the other schools were nice but not as prepared as us. Parker's favorite part of the event was the breaks because he got to explore the school. In his opinion the hardest song was a piece called “Tangerine Rag” because as a group everybody had a little bit of trouble, some more than others.









Aubree (Left), Laney, Parker, and Julian have high marks for the Honors Orchestra Competition.

Make sure you look around the building for details about our St. Patrick’s Day activities!

WHO'S MISSING?

By Brynn Sellers and Londynn Clifton

Brynn and I interviewed Ms. Wasiniak, Mrs. Rumsey, Mr. Sickel and Mrs. Espvik. If you didn't know, these people commonly sub here. Let's see how they liked it!

Ms. Wasiniak was subbing for Mrs. Sherman. We asked her some questions and she responded with great answers. She has been subbing for 2 years. Ms. Wasiniak's job before becoming a sub was an office manager and a stay at home mom. She said she started subbing because it is a flexible job and she can have the same hours as her kids. Ms. Wasiniak said her dream job is a dance instructor because that's what she did her whole life. The last thing she commented is that her favorite class to sub for is English.

Mrs. Rumsey was subbing for Mrs. Teal. A lot of you may not know her because this is her first year being a sub. She started subbing because it gives her the same, easy schedule as her kids and she loves it. Her dream job is a teacher and she would teach math or English. Before she started subbing she was a Marco's delivery driver.

Mr. Sickel was subbing in the gym for Mrs. Quillen. He has been a sub for 20 years in 8 districts. Currently he is subbing in Willard, Bellevue, and Norwalk. Before he started subbing he was a pastor. Sadly, he had to stop because he got Covid and just couldn't do it anymore. His dream job is still to be a pastor. He started subbing to help out at Willard because they needed more subs and he was available. His favorite subject to sub for is math.

Mrs. Espvik was subbing for Mr. Thimke. She has been doing this for 20 years just like Mr. Sickel. Before she was a sub she worked at a nursing home and at Rural King, she said she likes to jump around. Her dream job is coaching girls basketball at Ohio State. She started to sub when her kids started school, so she could work the days and be home at nights with them. Her favorite subject to sub for is the inclusion/support classes.

When you have a sub you may be nervous that they are mean, don't be! They may look intimidating but they are warm-hearted when you get to know them. All of these subs are so nice so don't be nervous if your teacher is absent!

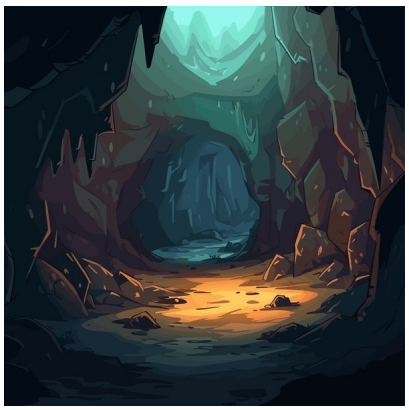
THE BLACK DEATH CAVE

An original story by Ryker Crumrine

The Black Death Cave was an abandoned mine shaft that got shut down due to 10 unexplained deaths. The cops searched every day for years until one day the case went cold. I am a ghost hunter and I found out about a cave from locals in a town that I just moved to. One day I decided to go and explore it with friends and when we first walked into the cave our equipment started going crazy. We found this one spot deep in the cave and we were going to talk to a ghost. When we got all set up we started talking and a ghost responded and this ghost was an evil spirit so we left in a hurry.

The next day I noticed that stuff was knocked off shelves and stuff was moved around. So I called the police that someone broke in and when they showed up nothing was missing or there was no forced entry. Later that day I heard footsteps upstairs in my house so I went to investigate and nobody was there. Then I heard a door open. Scared, I went and called the cops again. When they showed up they took a look around and found nothing. So I got to thinking and it popped into my head. It's the evil spirit from the cave.

So that night I called over my buddies and they didn't believe me, so I had them come over. At midnight they all showed up and we set up a way to talk to the evil spirit. And when we turned on the machines and all of the lights, the ghost instantly said something. We talked to it for 10 minutes and it told me to leave and to never come back. So I told him it was my house and he should leave. After I said that I started floating and was thrown across the room and when I went to get up it threw me again, this time into the ceiling. After I hit the ceiling I blacked out and don't remember anything after that. I'd been in a coma for 2 months and when I woke up the nurse said it's a miracle that I'm alive because all of my friends are dead.



THE SNOW

An original story by Connor Hoffman

It was the winter of 1843 and a huge snow storm hit America. There was a total of 54 feet of snow. Our main character, Bartholomew lives in the middle of the forest, known for paranormal activities. People often came there for ghost hunting but Bartholomew never saw anything, until the snow came.

The day the snow came Bartholomew was bamboozled. "54 feet in 8 hours! How is that even possible?". After Bartholomew's rage, he realized that he had little to no food left and that it would be near impossible to get more. He had to think about what could be done. "A couple cans of beans? Why is that all I have!" but he is interrupted by a rumble from outside.

Bartholomew went to the door and opened it up. As expected, a wall of snow was there. "Time to get shoveling," but after shoveling Bartholomew noticed that there was a tunnel behind the snow. "What the...,".

As he was about to walk in the tunnel he heard a rumble. He didn't know if he should go or not. But like every horror movie character ever, he decided to go and check it out. After walking for what felt like hours, he realized that it was a maze.

He tried to find his way back but there was no hope. "I swear there was only one path. Now there's more". After trying to go back he decided to just shovel through the snow like a logical person. But after shoveling he found another maze. Then he saw something, it looked like snow but it moved like a snake. And once again, he checked it out. "This never would have happened if I didn't explore this stupid tunnel!". But yelling was the worst thing he could have done because it heard him.

Bartholomew heard the rumbling of the snake moving towards him. His first instinct was to run but he slipped, of course. The snake was moving closer and Bartholomew got a good look at it. It had multiple rows of teeth and eyes that screamed, I'm hungry. He threw the shovel at it as a last resort but the snake ate it. And the last thing anybody ever heard of Bartholomew were his screams.

MOVING DAY

An original story by Krista Bergman

It's moving day, which is not a good thing. I am moving to a new neighborhood which unfortunately means a new school. I have moved three times and I'm only 14 years old.

"Lyla!," my mom obnoxiously says. "Wake up!"

So I reluctantly roll out of bed, get ready, and go downstairs. My mom cooked our last meal in this house. It's sad to be honest. This was my favorite house. My mom works as a meteorologist so she has to move for her job. My dog, Biscuit, waits patiently for some bacon. My dad is sitting next to me talking on the phone with his coworkers. As he hangs up he gives me a comforting look.

"I don't know why we always have to move, I'm leaving my friends and my school," I say.

"I'm sorry," my mom says and pats my shoulder. "We have to".

When the truck arrives we pack up all of our stuff and the drivers load it in.

When we leave I take one last look at our house. "Goodbye," I mumble as I step out the door. The car ride is agonizing and it's 3 whole hours. I'm glad Biscuit is with me. When we finally arrive, I see the house for the first time. White siding, grey window shutters with 4 windows in the front, two on the side, and one on the top which I'm assuming is the attic. I get out and open the door. The air is stale like it's been sitting there for a while.

"What do you think," my dad says as he nudges my shoulder.

"It's great," I reply half sarcastically.

"Cheer up, Lyla. Come on, I'll show you your room".

We go upstairs and there I see that attic door. I should have seen it was open but I'm too focused on seeing my room. So I get to my room and my dad shows me around. It's bigger than my last one.

My dad leaves and I start unpacking things into my room. There's a lot of noise outside my door, which probably means my parents' room is near mine. So I go outside and they aren't there. But there is someone else. He is tall, thin and has dark eyes. I realize that he is holding a baseball bat when he lunges for me.

NO RHYME OR REASON

An original story by Evie Stowers

Doobert wasn't any ordinary cat. He was *the cat. He wore clothes, sunglasses, and held his chin up high. But sometimes, it wasn't going to be so easy. His owners were getting another cat.*

Why? He would ask himself at night, his thoughts muddled. I'm the best cat. I don't growl or scratch, I watch over my owners at night, and... yeah.

The light turned on. Emily, one of Doobert's owners, approached him with a shaking cage. Doobert stared with watchful eyes.

"Hey buddy," Emily said as she knelt down. "It's time to meet your new brother! His name is Steubert." Doobert let out a low growl.

His name even rhymes with mine, he thought with disgust. Through the door of the cage, Steubert's amber eyes met his. Doobert immediately hissed at him, then ran away as his claws skidded across the floor.

It wasn't until a week passed that Doobert's curiosity won him over. He tentatively sniffed Steubert, and the new cat stood stock-still. Steubert leaned forward to smell him back, but Doobert threateningly raised a paw. The two then engaged in a serious staring contest. Their eyes started to water as the hackles on their back stood up.

"Guys, come on. It's been a *week," said Tom, Doobert's second owner. Steubert let out an innocent mew, and Tom immediately cooed. "Doobert. Let the poor guy have a chance." Doobert blinked twice.*

"I'm scheduling a spa appointment," said Tom with a smirk on his face as Doobert's tail swished excitedly. "*With Steubert." The cat paused. "Done. It's scheduled for tomorrow, and I expect your best behavior."*

As Doobert paused at the cat door to the feline spa, Steubert bumped into him while passing. He looked back at the hesitant cat with invisible raised eyebrows. Reluctantly, Doobert entered the spa as a woman with a blonde pixie cut gave him a smile.

"Welcome back!" The woman said in a nasally voice. She helped Doobert and Steubert onto the comfy beds, and she dressed Doobert in a pink zip-up jacket with matching sunglasses. When Steubert got dressed up too, the two cats were matching. Doobert looked in distaste, but then reminded himself to have fun. The woman turned on LED colors, lighting up the room in pink and blue. It looked like delicious cotton candy that Doobert had once stolen from his owners, and he felt his mouth start to drool.

Doobert's tail swished in joy, and he felt glad that he could share this experience with some company.

Maybe it won't be so bad after all, thought Doobert.