



HAZLETON ELEMENTARY  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

# Castle Caller

FALL/WINTER EDITION 2024

IN 1924:  
(100 YRS AGO)

- The Walt Disney Company was founded
- Pay just a penny for a handful of candy
- Native Americans were granted US citizenship
- A dollar was worth nearly \$18 today
- Life expectancy in the US was around 60 years old whereas today it is almost 80

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## Summer Rocks & So Do Crocs by Jacelyn Pena

Students are now allowed to wear Crocs! This was a noticeable change for students this year. Our survey showed over 80% of students love that they are able to wear crocs. This can be seen when walking the halls. Unfortunately 40% of students don't like the required sports-mode (the strap behind the ankle/heel). Airplane mode, as Dr. Scarcella calls it, is not allowed. Students were also asked about their summer. Many went to amusement

parks like Knoebels or Dorney. Some played games like Fortnite and Roblox. Others spent time with family and friends, some out



Crazy for Crocs! 8th grade students show off their Crocs!

of the country. **Vincenzo Marcus** went to Europe, a different continent. He went to Italy, Turkey, and Greece. He saw ruins, the Colosseum, Sistine Chapel, and more. He said his favorite part of the trip was petting a very large stray cat on the streets of Greece. **Laury Agosto Alfonso** went to the Dominican Republic to visit her dad and his family. She even went to a cave with deep water where one can jump off the high rocks into the water.

## Concert at the Castle by Criscany Diaz



Lights flashed and exciting music played while students waited for the singer to appear. Then, rising pop star singer, Hayes Warner stepped on the stage singing "Predator." This had students at the Castle on their feet. The atmosphere was really exciting. Students were happy and singing along, which made the whole

experience more fun. After that, the singer introduced herself and said that Hazleton was her loudest and best audience. She explained that Hazleton had a special place in her heart. She then sang different songs including "Dead to Me," an unreleased song, "Paradise" by Bruno Mars, and had students sing along to

"I'm Just a Girl" by No Doubt. The next song was her own called "Breadcrumbs." Students seemed to know this song as she ran through the auditorium giving the students high fives. She then thanked everyone and reminded us how much she loves Hazleton.

Please see **Concert** on page 3





# Pumpkin Patch by Jaslyn Pena



Castle Students conducting pumpkin investigations.

The third graders went on an exciting trip to Burger's Pumpkin Patch on Friday, October 18th. Students learned about how food is grown on farms. They were able to play with Ruby, a baby goat, and even fed the pigs and chickens! After that the third graders went on a hayride to pick out their perfect pumpkin to take home. Back in the classroom, the fourth graders joined in the fun with pumpkin investigations.



# Halloween Parade by Jaslyn Pena



Students dress as Crayons in the Castle Halloween Parade.



Elementary students (grades 3-6) at the Castle enjoyed their annual Halloween parade on Wednesday, October 30th. Students had a lot of fun dressing up in their costumes. They then walked around the school area showing off their costumes to Arthur Street Elementary School, parents, and local neighbors. As part of the festivities, the PTA held a Halloween parade banner contest for all elementary homerooms. Students were to be involved in creating a banner to hold introducing their class in the parade. The most creative banner won pizza for their Halloween class party. **Miss Smith's 3rd**

**grade and Mrs. Cauley's 6th grade homerooms** were the winners! Teachers also had costume contests. See results on page 9.

Parade banner contest winners below.





# Thanksgiving

by Ellianna Liranzo

Many wonder what happened on that first Thanksgiving. In 1621, it was a celebration of the Pilgrims' first harvest in America. This harvest celebration included 52 pilgrims/English settlers and 90 Wampanoag Indians. So, it included about 142 people in Plymouth, Massachusetts. The celebration, which did include a big feast, took place for three days. They also played games, sang, and danced. Even though the first celebration wasn't called Thanksgiving, it developed into that over the years. It

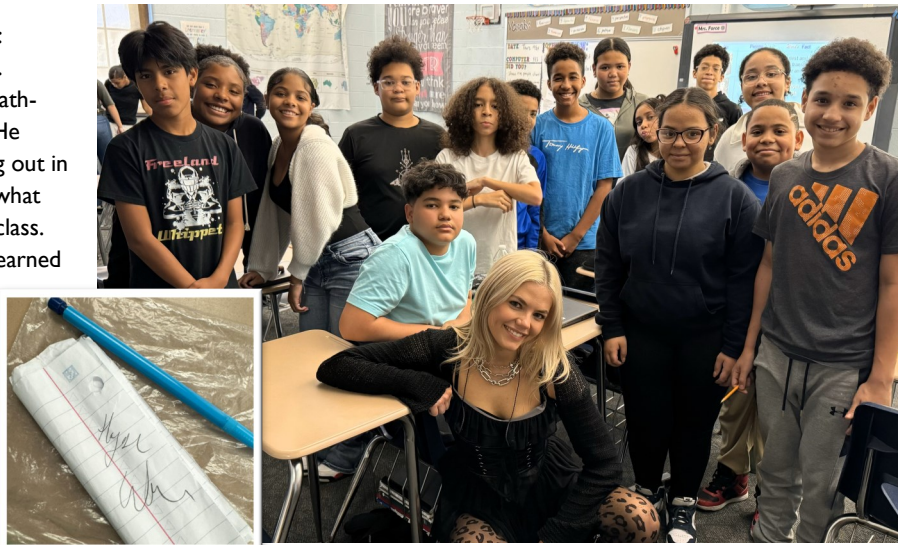
became a day to give thanks, and we have a lot of reasons to be thankful. We asked castle students what they are thankful for. **Amy Hernandez Rodriguez:** I am thankful for my mom because she does her best to take care of me. She tries to give my brother and I the best life. I love her for everything she has done. She is the best mother on earth. My dream is to become a surgeon not only because I want to be a surgeon but because I want to give my mom a better life and buy her a new



house. **Kimberly Rey Rivera:** I'm thankful for having a wonderful mom and dad because they both try their best on giving me my needs. **Sebastian Santana:** My family, education, health, country, friends, enemies, shelter, and food.

Third graders enjoyed a great Thanksgiving meal from the Cafeteria.

Excitement in the classroom: **Brendan Ramos** from Mrs. Force's classroom went to bathroom prior to the concert. He found Hayes Warner hanging out in the hallway. She asked him what they were learning about in class. He explained that they just learned about the Renaissance. She seemed interested so he told her that she should come see his classroom, and she did! The class even got her autograph. Check out the pictures!



*"It was really fun meeting her! We were lucky she came to our class and I was able to get her autograph!"*

~ Kevin Estudillo

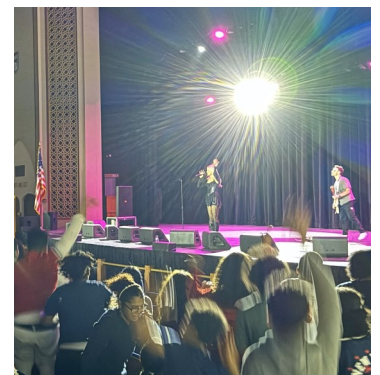
## Concert

(continued from front page)

Hayes then invited **Elia** from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to come on the stage and told him that the last song was "Shut up." During this song, Mr. Bonomo threw shirts into the crowd. This caused a lot of excitement as students started to stand up and jump around. She then let the audience ask her questions. One student asked, "How old were you when you started singing?" She

answered that she started singing at age 8 and was interested in theater, music, etc. Before leaving she asked the students to react to her new song "ZIP." There were lots of cheers. Students were polled and interviewed after the concert. Middle School students gave the concert a 4.3 star rating with 144 out of 228 students giving it 5 stars. "Just a

Girl" and "Shut Up" were voted as favorite songs sang by Hayes. **Ana Espinal** (7<sup>th</sup> grader) really loved how Hayes Warner explained her songs about her past. Espinal thought it was very heartwarming. She loved everything about the performance.



# Play a Fall Sport

By Jaslyn Pena



Football Players:  
Gavin, Nathan, & Carlos



Soccer Players:  
Joanna, Shey, Maikel, & Kevin



Field Hockey Players:  
Jioshaylee & Jacelyn



Volleyball Players:  
Estrella & Briana



Cross Country Runners:  
Axel & Jiliana



Are you interested in playing soccer, volleyball, football, field hockey, or running cross country? If so, keep reading...we are here to help!

According to our middle school survey, 41 middle school students are interested in playing a fall school sport but have no idea how to sign up. We hope to try and help by answering some questions from the survey.

The most asked question is: How do I sign up? You need a physical as part of your registration to play any school sport. Getting the physical with your intended sports selected on that physical paperwork is the first necessary step in trying to get on the team. Don't worry, our school offers free physicals at the High School Gymnasium. This free physical will be offered in the spring. Pay attention near the end of the year for more information. When getting your physical, be sure to look for team lists to put your name on. If you miss the free physical, you can get one from a family doctor. Practices or tryouts for each fall sport will be around August. Fall sports are different from basketball and cheerleading.

Basketball and Cheer are done within each middle school. Therefore, the castle has their own team and practices will be at our school. Other sports are a collection of players from all the schools. Volleyball, football, soccer, cross country, and field hockey are played at the Hazleton High School facilities, usually on the main campus (near the high school) or football stadium, Harman-Geist Memorial Field. The fall sports season traditionally lasts from late August until early October.

Another concern addressed in the survey was being able to play in 8th or 9th grade if they did not play the year before. The answer is absolutely. You can start a new sport at any time. Just get that physical and try it out!

Transportation seemed to be another concern for many students. Unfortunately, the district does not meet all transportation needs. There is a sports bus that will take students to the sports facilities if their practice is immediately after school. This is extremely helpful, but you will then need to find your own transportation home after the practice.

Can boys play volleyball? Yes,

middle school soccer, volleyball, and cross country are for both girls and boys. That means that both can try out for those fall sports. This past fall, the castle had 13 middle school students playing in a fall sport for the Hazleton Cougars.

**Nathan Caba, Gavin Deritis,** and **Carlos Alcantara** make many tackles with the football team.

**Estrella Taveras** and **Briana Colon** dig, set, and spike with the volleyball team. **Jioshaylee**

**Vasquez** and **Jacelyn Pena** used their hockey sticks to score on the field hockey. **Joanna Estudillo,** **Kevin Estudillo,** **Maikel Juarez,** and **Sheyneliz Pineda** head, dribble (with their feet), and kick the ball to score on the soccer field.

**Jiliana Melo** and **Axel Nunez** showed their endurance by running with the cross-country team.

Most of these 13 students said they had fun, and they will be joining their team again next year. Try it out, if you are as eager! Reminder, if you are interested in joining them next year, listen to the announcements in the spring (usually in May) for information regarding physicals and signing up. If you have questions, you can always talk to Mrs. Planutis (our school guidance counselor). We hope to see you out there!



# Dodgeball Delirium

by Griscany Diaz and Jaslyn Pena



A friendly competition with loud cheers came from the Hazleton Elementary Middle School gymnasium on the afternoon of Tuesday, Nov 26th. The National Junior Honor Society led by **Mrs. Dudeck** hosted their thrilling annual dodgeball tournament to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Money was donated through team entries, players watching, and teacher donations. In total, the NJHS raised \$725 for the National Cancer Society.

On tournament day, ten middle school teams competed to be the best team of the Castle. There were 2 eighth grade teams and 8

seventh grade teams. The music was pumping, and the crowd was going wild. It was an exciting tournament to watch. **PowerPuff Girls** stood out as a crowd favorite especially since they were the only girls team. They even put up a good fight on the court. After some fun double elimination competition, we had a best out of three championship game. The championship game was the **Dominican Rockets** (7th graders) vs the **Joel the Goat Team** (8th graders). Joel the Goat Team was victorious, winning 2 out of 3 games. And Dominican Rockets, who were sporting jerseys, won best dressed team of the tournament. Each player on both teams received a gift card from Popeyes.

It is then tradition that the championship team plays the teachers. But first, the students of the castle

got a little surprise. To add to the excitement, three inflatable dinosaurs entered the gym as cheerleaders. **Ms. McCuen, Mrs. Force, and Miss Guerrero** ran around the gym with the cheerleaders' pom poms as they tried not to trip over their own inflatable tails. Mrs. Force almost slipped once as she was pumping up the crowd. The traditional teacher vs student game looked a bit different this year. The teacher's team was short on players and was joined by an inflatable dinosaur and some students. It was a blast for all. Students had fun, and money was raised for a good cause. In the end, the dodgeball tournament was a huge success. A big shout out goes to anyone who donated and participated.



**Luizxander Capellan ducks a ball thrown by Joel Gonzalez**



Above left: Joel the Goat Team won the tournament. Above center: Dominican Rockets won best dressed. Right: Delightful dinosaurs as charming cheerleaders.



## Castle Basketball Schedule

### Games at the Castle:

Tues 1/7 vs Maple Manor  
Tues 1/14 vs Holy Family  
Thurs 1/16 vs McAdoo  
Tues 1/21 vs West Hazleton  
Tues 1/28 vs Valley  
Tues 2/11 vs MMI

**Boys** play at 6:00. **Girls** play at 7:00.

**Mountaineer Cheerleaders** cheer both games!



**"Come on  
out and  
support our  
Mounts!"**

**~ Mr. Wilner**





As predicted,  
it's a girl!

*"I liked when he kept interrupting himself so he didn't have to do the trick."*

~ Zoey Mendez-Villanueva



## Breaking News! by Jaslyn Pena

**Mrs. Bruno's** third grade Science class adopts a cow!

The class adopted a 100-pound dairy calf through a program called Discovery Dairy. Photos and stories will be sent to the class about the calf's life on the farm. Students even had the opportunity to guess the gender of their

new classroom mascot. All third grade students joined in the fun (38 students guessed boy and 47 guessed girl). Third grade students then had a gender reveal at the park. With the help of a small confetti cannon, students learned the answer... It's a girl! Her name is **Mootilda the Mootainer**.



## Magic Show by Jaslyn Pena



The talented magician, Mr. Brian Richards, came to the Hazleton Elementary Middle school and did some incredible magic! Kids from the upper-level grades at the Castle were able to watch and enjoy! We researched Richards (using his website) and learned of his interesting past. Mr. Richards discovered at a very young age that he loved to make others laugh. Then at the age of six, Richards started falling in love with the art of magic. He received a beginner magic set for Christmas and was hooked. By the age of 10, he was getting paid to perform at birthday parties and similar events. Throughout high school, Richards worked at a magic shop which only fueled his passion. In college, he was an opening comedy magic act for celebrity comedians including Ellen Degeneres, Kevin

James, and Jeff Dunham.

He realized that he loved entertaining people with the combination of magic and comedy, especially to kids and families. Richards has now been entertaining full-time for almost 25 years. It was noticeable. Overall students enjoyed the show even though they gave it 3.18 star rating out of 5. We believe that the rating deserves to be much higher. After talking with Richards, we learned that the show was designed more for younger

students (for 3rd and 4th graders). That may have hurt the ratings, but many middle school students still really enjoyed the show with 42 students giving it 5 stars. Favorite tricks included: The two red balls that magically appeared, the rope that went from one piece to three and back to one, pulling the different color papers out of his mouth, Nick the bug on the rope, and when he made his head shrink and grow large. The tricks were fun, but students mostly enjoyed his humor and when he called students to the stage. Many thought it was funny when he counted down about to do a trick but then started talking about something else. Overall, most students would agree they had a good time and it was worth missing class for.



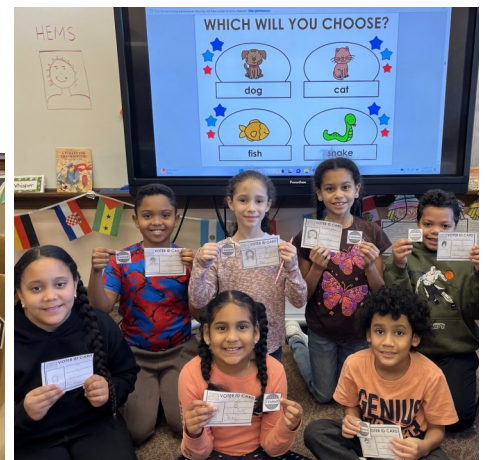
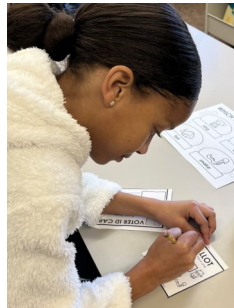


# Pet Election

by Criscany Diaz

This 2024 election was important. We were voting for a new president, and it was all over the news. Students should be informed about the process. Ms. Astorino's third and fourth grade ELD classes learned about the election process through a mock election for a class pet. Their voting options included a pet dog, cat, fish, or snake. They made voter registration cards, stood in line to vote, and cast their vote on a paper ballot. They even received an "I Voted" sticker when they were finished. They also

helped count the ballots and chart the winners for each class. Most students in Ms. Astorino's class voted for a dog! Students then listened to the story, Grace for President, which briefly explained the electoral votes.



## Would You Rather?

Middle School Results are in!  
Would you rather...

Another music concert or a magic show?  
**Concert** - 205, Magic show - 23

Have a dog or a cat?  
**Dog** - 175, Cat - 53

Be Spiderman or Batman?  
**Spiderman** - 151, Batman - 77

Spend one minute in a room full of spiders or one night in a real haunted house?  
One minute with spiders - 69, **One night in haunted house** - 157

Watch the same movie for the rest of your life or eat the same meal for the rest of your life?  
**Same movie** - 167, Same meal - 60

Hop everywhere or skip everywhere?  
Hop - 46, **Skip** - 182

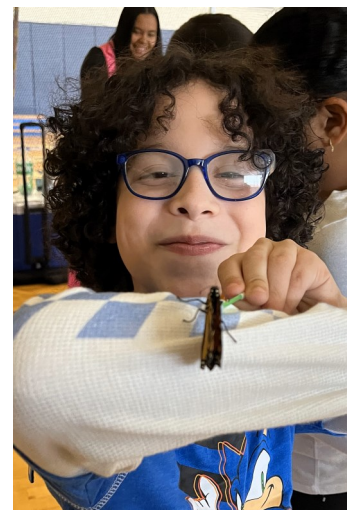
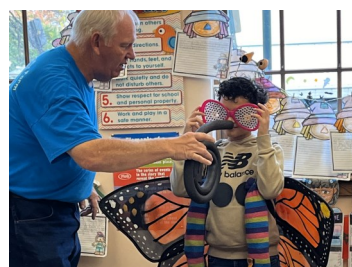
Be the smartest person ever or the most athletic person ever?  
**Smartest** - 139, Most Athletic - 89

## Butterfly Farm

by Criscany Diaz

Folk's Butterfly Farm from Nescopeck visited fourth grade on October 16th. Folk's came into the classroom and demonstrated the butterfly life cycle through 3 stations. The first station taught the students the life cycle of the Monarch butterflies. The second station taught students about the caterpillar. In this station, students not only learned all about caterpillars

but had the opportunity to hold one. The third station was the butterfly tent. In the butterfly tent students were able to interact with the live butterflies and were even able to feed them. Students seemed to have had a great time interacting with the butterflies.





# Spotlight!

Meet the voices behind the morning announcements:  
Esther Alcantara, Ava Kerrick,  
Gavin Deritis, & Joseph Mejía

Our morning announcers bring energy and enthusiasm to the start of the day, engaging listeners with daily news and reminders.



*"This is a very good opportunity to be able to keep the school informed."*

~ Esther Alcantara

*"The best part for me was seeing the reactions of the students when we realized we won. I'm also always amazed at the artistic abilities of the students!"*  
~ Ms. Rinker

## Christmas Door Decorations by Esther Alcantara

This year's door decoration contest was very interesting, from seeing lights hanging on the ceiling to seeing a building explode! Congratulations to the winners this year with their astonishing doors.

Winners from Middle School:

1st place - **Mr. Wilner**

2nd place - **Mrs. Mooney**

Fifth and sixth grade:

1st place - **Ms. Rinker**

2nd place - **Mrs. Sanfelice**

Third and fourth grade:

1st place - **Mrs. Rasinger**

2nd place - **Miss. Smith**

Those were the door decoration winners, but let's not forget about our wonderful ornaments!

Winners this year were:

**Mrs. Force** for Middle School,

**Mrs. Rasinger** for 3/4 grade,

and lastly, **Mr. Glenn** for 5/6

grade. Thank you all for showing an amazing effort and letting us have a wonderful time.



1st - Wilner



2nd - Mooney



1st - Rinker



2nd - Sanfelice



1st - Rasinger



2nd - Smith



# Castle Scrapbook



## Teacher Halloween Contest:



### Congratulations:

- Best Female:  
**Mrs. Bruno**
- Best Male:  
**Mr. Campbell**
- Most Creative:  
**Mrs. Cauley**
- Best Group:  
**Grade 3 Teachers**



# Shout Out!

Ms. Kile's third grade homeroom and Mr. Campbell's homeroom raised the most money for the Fundwalk! They were rewarded with a pizza party.



## Christmas Puzzles For You!

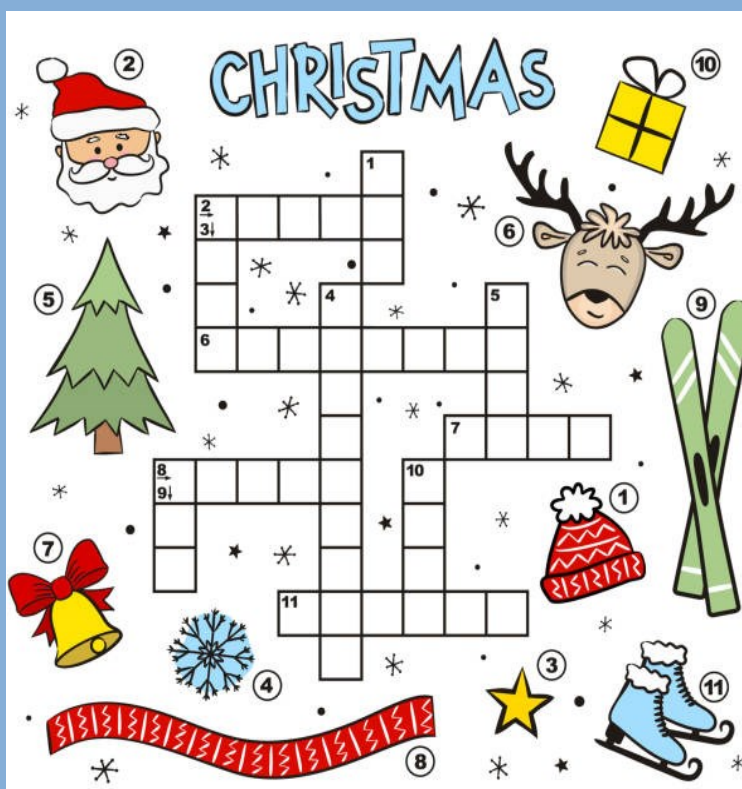
### Santa's Reindeer

Dasher Vixen Donner  
Dancer Comet Blitzen  
Prancer Cupid Rudolph



d a n c e r e b q h  
a b r f d e i l w h  
s x e n d c f i m p  
h d n a a n k t o l  
e e n r n a q z c o  
r z o p i r u e x d  
c u d b l p a n i u  
v i x e n t o p v r  
t e m o c u p i d m

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## The Castle Caller Staff

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Thank you to students, faculty, and staff who contributed to this edition.



Crossword Key: 1-hat | 2-Santa | 3-Star | 4-Snowflake | 5-Tree | 6-Reindeer | 7-bell | 8-Scarf | 9-Ski | 10-Gift | 11-Skates



