



LAUREL SCHOOL DISTRICT Winter NEWSLETTER

"Come back with your shield - or on it" • www.laurel.k12.pa.us • Winter 2019

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

As we approach the halfway point of the 2018-2019 school year, our theme "A New Beginning" has positively impacted the 7th and 8th grade students. The year began with a successful transition and has continued through the first semester. The students have established routines and have acclimated themselves to the new building as well as a change in the overall culture. Additionally, they have experienced their first Two Hour Delay and the adjustments to the daily schedule seamlessly.

As we enter the winter months, we

continue to recognize the achievements in the middle school level; two students are selected to represent their classmates as Student of the Month recipients. In order to achieve this honor, these students had to demonstrate the ability to meet high expectations set forth in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Character, and Service. Teachers proudly selected Aaron Doughty, 7th grade and Erika Price, 8th grade and for the month of December. In January, 7th grader Zandon Shaffer and 8th grader Danielle Pontius graced the

middle school showcase. The El Canelo family sponsors our student of the month. The students are then able to decorate a showcase in the Middle School hallway and enjoy lunch at EL Canelo restaurant alongside the senior high students of the month.

During the winter and second semester, the school continues to foster and engage students with learning outside of the traditional classroom as well as continue to work on social aspects of their learning. At the end of the month, we have an agent scheduled from the Attorney General's office

who will address Social Media and the impact that it has on Middle Level Education. On February 8th, the Middle School will have their second social gathering, Valentine's Day Dance.

As always, the staff and administration are motivated to continue creating this new environment for the students at Laurel and eager to showcase the abilities and talents of the middle school student body.

Submitted By:
Mr. Kevin Mahoney

AN UPDATE ON 2 STRONG SPARTANS



Young Kosey Fennick and Hayden Hamilton have shown strength, determination, grit and spirit. They have embraced the challenges put before them. They have shown the Laurel community the meaning of perseverance.

A little more than nine months ago, young Kosey was taken by life flight from his school day to Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh. At that time Kosey was suffering from a severe headache, facial drooping and leg weakness. What they thought was a complex migraine or stroke turned out to be a tumor in his cerebellum with brainstem involvement. He underwent a craniotomy on April 16, 2018 to remove part of the tumor. The entire tumor couldn't be removed because of a portion of it involving the brainstem. He was in PICU for a week before being discharged home; On May 1, 2018 he went back to Children's for a 2nd brain surgery in 2 weeks. On May 3, 2018 his tumor was identified as a Ganglioglioma.

Kosey continues to receive treatments but also continues to be a special little boy. This disease can't stop him from playing baseball, basketball, soccer, fishing, being a boy scout, or rough housing with his siblings in the yard. He continues to be a loving big brother and smiles for the camera while he lay in a hospital bed receiving treatment. In sum, Kosey does not allow his diagnosis to be an impediment to a normal childhood.

Hayden Hamilton dedicated himself to the weight room in preparation for the 2018 football season. He had suffered a knee injury the prior year but was determined that would not stand in the way of his goals. On August 31, 2018 while playing defense for the Laurel football team, Hayden took an awkward hit while trying to make a

tackle. His technique was solid. Neither he nor the running back from the Rochester Rams did anything on the football field that wasn't seen a thousand times before. Unfortunately for Hayden, this hit would be different. This hit left him helpless on the field unable to move his lower extremities.

Since that devastating day, Hayden has once again turned to an obsessive drive for improvement. He is determined to walk again. The road to recovery has been slower than his patience will allow. He has the unconditional love and support of his mother Melissa and his father Chad. Strong friendships born in childhood have let him know that he will not have to fight this battle alone. Along the way Pirates, Panthers, and Penguins have offered their support.

Hayden also continues to be a serious student. He is not only dedicated to his physical recovery, but also dedicated to his studies. Hayden continues to gain strength. Superintendent Mr. Leonard Rich commented: "I think Hayden is well on his way to recovery. He recently shook my hand at a basketball game and his strength was noticeably improved. He also made fun of my shirt and said I was yelling too loud. I needed to settle down. Hayden has not lost his wit and charm."

As we recently celebrated Martin Luther King, Jr. Day let us remember that it was Dr. King's wish that he be judged upon the content of his character. Kosey and Hayden have a depth of character that is unparalleled. Their individual futures remain bright because they refuse to lose. They remain comfortable in who they are. They are not defined by their challenges but rather their reaction to said challenges. They remain an inspiration to Spartan Country!

LAUREL FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA ACHIEVES AT THE STATE LEVEL



At Laurel we never get tired of raising our index finger and demonstrating that we are number 1. If we are going to participate, we might as well be the best. This relentless never surrender attitude exemplified by the Spartans of antiquity used to proclaim; "Come back with your shield or on it!"

Our FFA students recently went to the Pennsylvania State Farm Show and walked away with several honors. Both of our square dance teams brought home gold! The Laurel chapter also brought home 13 Keystone degrees. The Keystone degree is the 2nd highest degree attainable in the program. Thirteen degrees was more than any other chapter in the state.

A special thanks goes out to the vocational-agriculture teacher and chapter adviser, Mr. Randy Harrold. Under his leadership, the Laurel FFA has experienced a renaissance.

Submitted By: Mr. Leonard Rich



LAUREL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DURING THE HOLIDAYS



Laurel Elementary School is always a busy place, but this past December the students, staff, and parents really picked up the pace. It started early in the month with the PTO sponsored "Santa Land". Through the hard work of the PTO and parent volunteers, along with donations and help from local vendors, every student was able to pick out gifts for their close family members for the Holidays. We also worked with Project Hope to collect donations for local families so we can ensure they have what they need to enjoy this special time of the year. Something new we did this year was a door decorating contest that was run by PTO. The teachers and the students worked together to design and create



their door decorations. On designated days the students voted for their favorite door by placing money in a bag that was set-up by each door. We raised over \$2000 in three days and all those proceeds went to help a local family. We ended the month as we always do with our Holiday party. The students participated in book exchanges, played games, and even had a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Claus. We are able to bring these experiences to our students because of the partnerships we have developed between the school staff, the parents, and community members. Great things are possible when we work together.

Submitted By: Mr. Dan Svirby

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS AT LAUREL MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL

During the first semester of the school year, Mr. Wypych and his entrepreneur students were hard at work on two key components in his class: learning on the tools in the shop along with the CAD (Computer Aided Drafting) programs plus preparing to own and operate a business. Each semester, students taking the class run a fully operational business from conception to production designing to creating and selling the items to the staff of the district and, also, to the students at the Elementary Santa Land.



The students learn to tie all of those classes together into a project based learning class allowing them to dabble with the ins and outs of running a business.

This year, the students operated a business in selling items such as cutting boards to yard games. The business was a huge success. After deducting certain costs, the class was able to profit over \$800 (Eight Hundred Dollars). Mr. Wypych has recently stated that it was rewarding to watch the students' visions come to life as they complete their projects and show excitement in managing a business. He, also, stated that the student's dedication and wide array of individual talents were what made our school sale a successful school sale.

Submitted By: Mr. Mark Fregel



SPAIN TOUR 2020

A 9 day tour of Spain through EF (Education First) is being planned for next summer. Any student in grades 9-12 is invited to enroll. You do not have to be in Spanish class to come along on tour! Come and see Mrs. Ernst in room 206 at the high school if you would like to enroll or have questions about the tour. (724) 658-9056 x 1206

Experience historical sights alongside icons of Spanish art and literature. See masterpieces by Velázquez, the windmills of Cervantes' Don Quixote, and the famous Alhambra in Granada. From Madrid's Palacio Real to the Seville Cathedral, discover the many religious and cultural influences that have made Spain the eclectic country it is today.