



THE RAIDER REPORT



News for Students, By Students

School News Section **Githens Middle School's Clubs** *School clubs are now available*

by Talitha T. Kwon

Starting Friday, December 9, 2011 students at Githens Middle School (GMS) will be starting to attend clubs during the last hour of school. Classes will be shortened to make this possible.

It took quite a while for the clubs to get started, the students were told they will be having clubs in school in early October. Students signed up in September and they are now beginning in December due to the work in organizing all of the students. Several students had even thought that maybe it was decided that there wasn't going to be any club activities because it took awhile for clubs to get started.

"It took *forever*," said several students when asked about how long it took until clubs started.

In order to allow for Club

time, core classes have each been shorted by seven minutes and the elective classes have been shortened to about thirty-nine minutes. Clubs at GMS take place from 1:20 pm to 2:20 pm some Fridays.

Even though students had already signed up for clubs in September there are many students who have yet to be assigned to one of the clubs offered.

"There are a lot of kids who still aren't signed up for clubs," one student had said. In the beginning over 100 students were not signed up.

Students will be going to the Media Center to choose which clubs they want to attend. They will have thirty two clubs to choose from, such as: Open Gym, Raider Writers, Japanese Club, Flag Football, Latino Ambassadors and many more. Make sure you are signed up for a club!

Githens Middle School Literary Magazine by Isabel Whitcomb

For the past five years Ms.Lamantia has organized the *Githens Middle School Literary Magazine* and is planning on doing it again this year. Throughout the school year talented poets, artists, and writers will submit their work to their Language Arts teachers. Their work will be published in the magazine in June.

Many genres are represented in the students' writing such as fiction and nonfiction. These can be used to create short stories, Poems, short plays, autobiographies or memoirs.

Writing is not the only thing that is submitted. Ms. Lamantia says, "Original artwork that people have either created in art class or on their own is also published." Artwork will help create a visually interesting magazine.

What it Takes

Not everyone's creations will be accepted. "Make sure that you're turning in a piece of writing or artwork that you are really proud of, and that you have worked hard on, one that you are comfortable with the school reading or viewing," Says Ms.Lamantia. So all you future writers and artists out there, make sure you participate in the *2011-2012 Literary Magazine* by submitting your work to your Language Arts teachers.



X-MAS RECEPTION TO BE HELD

BY ESHE BROOKS

The annual Christmas Reception will be sponsored by Mrs. Betty Scruggs and her Life Skills Classes A & B. The Reception will be held on Friday, December 16 for Class B, the other Reception is Monday, December 19. The Reception will take place in Room 502 (the Life Skills Classroom).

WHY IS THIS PARTY SPECIAL?

When asked why the reception happens every year, Mrs. Scruggs answered, "One reason we have the party is to give the students an opportunity to *show off* their finished products to teachers and family." The reception has a variety of different types of foods. Mrs. Scruggs also stated, "Menus include; Vegetarian and traditional Christmas foods."

BEING CREATIVE

The Christmas Reception will be very creative, there will be people at the door to greet teachers. Menus will be available and the classroom will be decorated. The Christmas Reception is set-up by the 8th grade students in Mrs. Scruggs classes, and their hard work is greatly appreciated.

The Christmas Reception is a big celebration for students' finished work and progress. Students are excited to share this reception with not only core teachers, but some elective teachers too. Invitations will be given out on December 12th through the 15th.

One "Can" Make a Difference

by Rosario Villa Neri

What *The Food Drive* Is Mainly About:

The students of Githens Middle School have contributed to the food drive that has started two weeks before Thanksgiving. This food drive is aimed at students and their families who are less fortunate. Students have been asked to donate at least one non-perishable food. Even though the holiday season will soon be over, students need food throughout the whole year.

Who Has Contributed To The Food Drive?

Many students brought different types of non-perishable foods and eight backpacks/ baskets were made for Thanksgiving. Ms. Lamantia said, "We will have more baskets for Christmas, because we collected more supplies than we did before Thanksgiving." There have been donations made throughout the whole school. Many students were happy that they were able to donate, like Faith Jones. She says, "It felt good because I was helping someone else."

Ms. Herbert, Ms. Lamantia, and Ms. Brady were able to take the baskets/backpacks directly to students' doors. Ms. Lamantia says, "We should take advantage of any opportunity we have to help students here." ESL teachers Ms. Rich, Ms. Kelly, and teacher facilitator, Ms. Franklin were also teachers who helped a lot with the food drive.

Lets Help Those Statistics Go Down!

The donations will be happily received until the end of the school year because families need food throughout the whole year. The statistics from *Feeding America* state that North Carolina's food insecurity rate is 15.7%, which is higher than the U.S national average for 2008-2010. There were also 15.5 million children under the age of 18 that suffered poverty. This means that together we can all help those rates decrease by donating at least one can or item of non-perishable food. Please help other people in school if you are able to.

MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT:Githens' Annual Winter Chorus Concert

by Faith Jones

Mrs. Bruer is holding her annual winter chorus concert at Resurrection United Methodist Church (right across the street from Githens Middle School) on Thursday, December 15 at 7 p.m. The concert, *Making Spirits Bright*, is sure to get people in the holiday spirit.

The advanced chorus classes have been preparing for this since October. They've worked hard on memorizing the music. Sometimes it's been a challenge, but they've had fun getting it done.

The inclusion of classic Christmas songs will allow everyone in the audience to recognize lyrics. People are definitely in for a treat. "Let it Snow," "Carol of the Bells," and "Silent Night," (just to name a few) are some of these classics that will be performed. The audience is even given chances to sing along!

The chorus students are extremely excited for the concert. "I'm very, very excited," says eighth grade choral student Rosario Villa. "It's been a lot of hard work, but it's worth it."

Students hope that many people can come and see the winter chorus concert! If you love Christmas and love getting in the holiday spirit, you are sure to enjoy. We'd love to see you there!

Editorials

GITHENS MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENTS UNHAPPY WITH CAFETERIA LUNCHES BY ALEX BIRD

Some students at *Githens Middle School* are not satisfied with the lunches they are receiving from the school's cafeteria. Whether this is because they feel that the cafeteria food is unhealthy, or they think that the food is simply unappealing, many students want a change.

Health

I personally think that the food could be much healthier. If I am buying school lunch I like to get a salad, but that is not always an option. If the school offered salads everyday, I

would definitely buy them. I also think that they could have more uncooked vegetables, because the cooking process removes some nutrients from them.

Taste

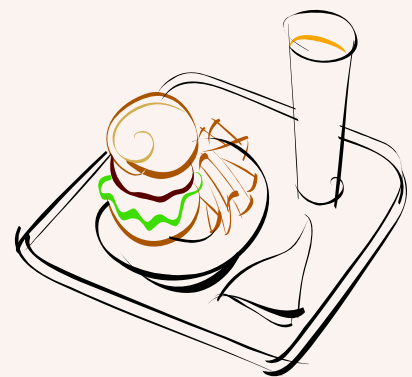
It would also be a nice change if we could have better tasting food. For example, I think that the lasagna tastes like cheese on wet cardboard. Sometimes the food is alright, but most days I question what it is that I'm eating.

Ways to Improve School Lunches

Some students have suggestions on how the school lunch could improve.

"A broader range of options would be worth a higher price," said school lunch buyer Kennedy Wilkins.

More lean meat and less fried food would also help me personally feel better about the food I am eating.



S G A S V S . B E N C H M A R K S

B Y T A Y L O R P H I L L I P S

Students at Githens Middle School know that this year instead of benchmarks, we're taking Small Goal Assessments (SGAs) and Cumulative Assessments (CAs) to test our content knowledge and see what we've learned so far in the school year.

So, which is better?

SGAs and CAs are much better for Githens as far as time is concerned. Benchmarks took up much of our instructional time and made the schedule hectic and unorganized. Although SGAs test limited subjects, they are only around twenty questions long. The CAs are much longer, (not longer than benchmarks) and they can

make up for the lack of tested material on the SGAs, still without taking away two or three hours of class time.

Personally, I think that taking SGAs are much easier than taking benchmarks, but not because the test is easier. Sitting in one desk for so long is very uncomfortable, and having to sit quietly drawing or reading may be fun, but it's not very productive. With SGAs and CAs, it allows us to complete other work we would be doing in class that day if we hadn't had to take the test. It is much more productive than having free reading time or drawing time while waiting for your classmates to finish.

Students and teachers agree that SGAs are better for Githens. "I like SGAs and CAs better than benchmarks. We don't have to deal with the craziness of the revised schedule, so it's easier for our transition between classes," eighth grader Genevieve Whitcomb said. Seventh grade Language Arts teacher Mrs. McCormick said, "I think SGAs and CAs are better than benchmarks because they are shorter and I like the questions more. Also, the reading selections are better than the ones on the benchmarks." Over all, I concluded that SGAs and CAs are

S C H O O L U N I F O R M S ?

B Y C A T R I O N A S C H O F I E L D

Rumor has been going around that Githens may switch to school uniforms. This idea isn't new; it's actually been going around for a while. While school uniforms may seem like a good idea, it

would cause many students to protest.

In my personal opinion, school uniforms shouldn't be necessary. The various styles and ways people dress shouldn't offend anyone, unless they have

strong opinions about what you should and shouldn't wear. People dress mostly to express who they are, and if we all wore the same thing, there wouldn't be as much vari-

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ety.

What do the students think?

I interviewed people about this idea, these were the responses:

What is your opinion on the idea of wearing school uniforms?

"I think it's stupid because people should be able to express their individuality, which is important."

"I don't think it's a good idea because kids would be mad that they are making us do something we don't want to do."

"I don't think we should because wearing what you want shouldn't be a problem."

Why in any way would it be a good idea?

"Because some people are judged by what they wear or how much money they have and get bullied."

"It would be a good idea because there wouldn't be any dress code violations."

The idea of school uniforms is negotiable, whether we will get them or not is another

thing. I doubt we will be getting them because as I said before, it's not necessary. I have always wondered what kind of uniform we would wear, and if we did have them, would we wear the same outfit every day?



**O . S . S IS MORE EFFECTIVE
BY JESSICA RUBIO**

Students with behavior problems at Githens Middle School have their consequences. They have O.S.S (Outside School Suspension) or I.S.S (In School Suspension.)

During O.S.S, kids won't be able to have an education. Then they will realize that they need their education. While at home kids won't be able to do anything but think of what they did and hopefully they will decide to do the right thing next time. O.S.S will help them and it will make them

not want to have OSS again.

ISS Won't Do Any Good

While a student has O.S.S, in class there won't be any problems while the student is gone. "O.S.S is better for the whole class because the other students can have a couple of uninterrupted days because the student won't be there," said Mr. Tracy, the coordinator of I.S.S. I.S.S is usually only for one period and the student will be back. For the students, it won't be fair. There will be disturbance for the rest of the kids.

A student that has never had O.S.S, may be afraid and not want to have it again. "Someone who has never been suspended gets scared," said Mr. Tracy. The point of O.S.S is to teach kids a lesson. I.S.S won't teach kids a lesson, they will just keep coming back to I.S.S. Kids then won't learn anything, kids need O.S.S to open their eyes.

I.S.S IS MORE EFFECTIVE

BY: ANNIE WHITCOMB

When thinking in terms of helping students, I.S.S (In-School Suspension) is more effective compared to O.S.S (Out of School Suspension) because students are supervised while being required to do community service, and the class work is provided by their teacher. I.S.S is run by Mr. Tracy all day in the old strings room beneath the library in the basement.

Which is Better?

After an interview with Mr. Tracy, I learned everything that goes on in I.S.S. During I.S.S, Mr. Tracy makes the students write sentences related to the bad decisions the students made in hopes that they won't make them again. He also talks to them about what it takes to be a good student and that your home life doesn't have to define your school life. Tracy said that I.S.S is more effective for the students because they can work on their academics and behavior, but O.S.S is better for the whole class because they can have a couple of uninterrupted days without the presence of that student. Mr. Tracy also said that O.S.S maybe more effective with students whose parents get mad at them because the kids get scared. However some students have parents that don't care and don't ask them anything about school, so that makes the students not care either.

After asking Mr. Tracy if he thought the students cared if they got I.S.S, he replied that they do for the most part, but when I asked him if he thought students cared if they got O.S.S, he replied that when students get O.S.S from him they often have an "I don't care, give it to me" type of attitude.

Those two comments, I believe, show that I.S.S is more effective. Students who get I.S.S seem like they really do care about doing better. I also interviewed a student asking what they thought. I asked her how many times she has been in I.S.S and if she has ever been suspended. She said, "I've never been suspended and this is my first time in I.S.S, I don't plan on making the same mistake again." The student in I.S.S was there for skipping. Two other friends that went with her will also be in I.S.S, but Mr. Tracy likes to spilt friends up which is another reason why I.S.S is better. If someone gets suspended then they could hang out with other people at home, but in I.S.S students aren't able to be with their friends.

Students who get I.S.S normally don't get suspended afterwards. This proves that I.S.S is helping them in some way. Mr. Tracy has group discussions with the students helping them become better students. He also talks about family problems and how the students getting I.S.S and O.S.S normally don't talk to their parents about problems at school. This helps the students in I.S.S because they are able to learn things they can't learn from their parents. This helps keep them out of I.S.S. If these same students were suspended its not helping them because they don't talk to anyone. Mr. Tracy has two goals: help the kids become better students and people, make sure the kids never want to come back.



MAKING FOREIGN LANGUAGE MANDATORY
Foreign language is an important skill that should be mandatory
in all school curriculums.

BY: RACHEL SAULS

Nowadays, with more and more languages being spoken in America, the importance of learning another language through school should be stressed. By schools making foreign language courses mandatory, we can ensure better job opportunities and better communication skills for all students.

Knowing a foreign language will be useful later as well as presently in life. "It helps because we can make new foreign students feel welcome by greeting them in their own language," says Maliik Marcin, an 8th grader taking courses in Spanish. Being able to read road signs and speak with natives will make traveling easier and will sim-

plify your vacation. Also, as Maliik stated, it can create a feeling of openness among newcomers.

It is important that we start learning foreign languages through school, as it is easier to learn a foreign language when you are younger as opposed to older. Though students might not have great interest in learning a foreign language at first, requiring this class gives them an opportunity to try something they weren't initially interested in. "I think it is easier the younger you are," agrees Ms. Tillery, the Spanish teacher here at Githens Middle School. "You're more willing to try and learn new things."

Schools can help their students by requiring foreign language classes since employers are more likely to hire applicants who know two or more languages. Even just taking a few simple courses in foreign language could be the difference in whether or not one acquires a prestigious job in the future. "Students will be more competitive in a global society," Ms. Tillery said, "It's almost a necessity to be able to speak another language and employers are looking for that." Knowing a foreign language is a key to success in the modern world.

School Bathrooms: A Needed Change! by Everett Elston Brown

The bathrooms in Githens Middle School are disgusting. The 8th grade bathroom does not have a mirror. One of the 7th grade bathroom stalls does not have a door; the bathrooms can become dirty during the day, making them disgusting.

A student named Bevin Copeland says, "The bathrooms smell horrible and there is always urine on the floor." This shows how some students are unhappy about the state of the bathrooms here at school.

The 8th grade bathroom does not have a mirror. This is bad because if you want to see how you look, you have no way of checking. Also, people may have to brush their teeth or put on make-up, so a mirror would help with our personal hygiene.

The 7th grade bathroom does not have a door for one of the stalls. If you have to use the bathroom someone could look and see you. Some people get self-conscious if people see them using the bathroom. As students, we deserve our right to privacy. No one should have to expose themselves in front of people. It is time our bathrooms are changed to respect our privacy and meet our personal needs.



Arts and Entertainment

MODERN WARFARE 3

by Aziz Ali

Inside this issue:

- New teacher Patrick Blackburn gets band out in the community. 2
- Githens' chorus records a song 2
- A musical masterpiece 3
- Stringtastic 3
- Did *Breaking Dawn Part 1* suck or was it good? 4
- Harry Potter vs. Twilight* 4
- Bandtastic 5
- Delightful food in Niagara 5
- Simpsons Comics 6

THE NEW ADDICTING GAME:

The new first-person-shooter world phenomenon, *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3* (made by Infinity Ward) recently came out on November 8, 2011, to replicate how World War 3 could start. This game can be purchased on Xbox 360, Playstation 3, Nintendo Wii, and PC at any electronic retail store. I got my copy from GameStop on November 8, 2011.

This new game is rated M for mature, so it can only be purchased by anyone who is 18 or older. Whoever is purchasing the game has to show a valid ID to the employee who is selling the item.

Modern Warfare 3 has revealed some new game modes such as, *Kill Confirmed* where you have to collect a dog tag after you get a kill. You can deny a kill by collecting a red dog tag, which means an enemy killed that player and you can deny their kill.

This is the eighth *Call of Duty* game that has been released. There has been *Modern Warfare*, *Modern Warfare 2* which followed up *Modern Warfare*, and now there is *Modern Warfare 3*. *Modern Warfare 3's* campaign starts only two hours after *Modern Warfare 2's* campaign ends.

"Kill confirmed is a new creative idea, it is easier to get into action. It seems more realistic. When you find a dog tag you know that person is missing in action," states eighth grader Brian Leonardo.

In the Woods

by Julia VanLandingham

MURDER! Twenty years after being the only one of three friends to come out of the woods, Detective Rob Ryan, the found boy, now has to investigate the murder of a twelve year old girl...in the very same woods.

About the Book and its Author

In the Woods is a murder mystery set in Dublin, Ireland. This was Tana French's first novel, first written on January 30th, 2007. It has won several awards for "best first novel," and the Edgar Allen Poe Award, all in the year 2008.

The book has a wee bit of a slow start, but really picks up the further you get into it. I should warn you though, there are several red herrings throughout the book which really keep you guessing. The ending isn't what you'd expect at all really, this can be good way or bad, really depending on your opinion.

"It is a very, very, very good, and grabs your attention," states eighth grader Talitha Kwon. "It was kind of a slow beginning, but very descriptive."

I wouldn't suggest this book to young children, it's kind of graphic, gory, and twisted.



New Teacher, Patrick Blackburn Gets Githens Band out in the Community.

by Risper Ochieng

First Duke Women's basketball, then Durham Bulls...

"We're playing where?!" This was what probably raced through the minds of band students when their teacher told them where he wanted them to play. Mr. Blackburn contacted the Duke women's basketball team and also the Durham Bulls. He asked if his advanced bands could play the National Anthem at their stadiums. They said yes and now Mr. Blackburn is working hard to get his students to memorize the piece.

A Change in the Band Program

This is Mr. Blackburn's 6th year teaching at DPS, but this is his first year at Githens Middle School after leaving W.G. Pearson. It was a hard task to replace Mr. Denny, the former teacher. Mr. Denny retired last June after 39 years of teaching. The change in leadership naturally caused some skepticism among the students. "I didn't really like him because I didn't think anyone could replace Mr. Denny," eighth grade advanced band student, Andrew Bowling stated. Mr. Blackburn seems to have changed at least some of the minds of the band students. The same student who said the first quote, later said this, "I really like that he's trying to get us outside to show off our skills. "

What is Mr. Blackburn Trying To Do?

"I was very excited to start a new challenge," Mr. Blackburn told me with a smile. The 29-year old showed no signs of unhappiness as he was preparing for band, organizing the dates for upcoming performances. February 6th is the Duke women's basketball game. The Durham Bulls performance is April 27th. I asked the teacher how he felt about his job after a few months of teaching here. "I absolutely love my job. I get to come and work with enthusiastic kids and play music all day," Patrick Blackburn said. Needless to say, Mr. Blackburn is trying to move the band program forward.

Githens' Chorus records a song for Walton Music

by Joan Mae Dela Cruz

Githens' Advanced Chorus students were given an opportunity to be the first ones to record a new song called *Cherokee Rose*, composed by James E. Green. It was recorded on

December 8, 2011 in the Media Center of Githens Middle School. The recording will be used by Walton Music to market *Cherokee Rose* and will be heard by many choral directors throughout United States and possibly around the world.

This recording will be put on a CD and will be published in 2012 by Walton Music. The recording will also be on their website and the websites of several music retailers. The Githens' chorus teacher, Mrs. Bruer said, "As chorus teachers look for new music for their choirs to perform, they like to be able to look at a copy of the music and hear a recording."

A Githens chorus student said "It's cool that we got to record a song that nobody has ever heard before." Others felt excited, nervous, proud, and honored that they were the first ones to record the song.

What is Cherokee Rose?

Cherokee Rose is not just a name of a song, it's also a legend. It all started when the Cherokee Indians were forced to leave North Carolina. During this event many Indians died. The mothers of the Cherokees grieved so much, so the chiefs prayed for a sign to lift the mothers' spirit and give them strength. Then, a rose grew wherever a mother's tear touched the ground. The composer's grandmother was a Cherokee Indian, so this is what inspired the song.



A New Musical Masterpiece: Drake's Latest Album

by Serena Posluszny

On November 15th, 2011 all over the world, rapper, actor, and singer Drizzy Drake released his newest album "**Take Care**" through Cash Money Universal Motown Records.

Aubrey "Drizzy" Drake Graham was born in Toronto, Ontario (Canada) on October 24th, 1986. He is 25 years old, and closely affiliated with Young Money Entertainment, although not signed with them. He has had much success in the past, but only now can everyone truly understand Drake on a new level. This is due to him 'spit-rapping' his before un-exposed feelings in "**Take Care**"- feelings that he didn't previously sing or rap about.

Drake's first mixed tape, "**Room for Improvement**" (2006) was just the beginning of his career. Aubrey's Grammy - awarded mixed tape "**So Far Gone**" (2009) then showed the world who Drake is, and the album "**Thank Me Later**" (2010) proved that he would be something to reckon with, and that he was not just an actor and wanna-be rapper, but a true artist in the music industry. Both let us know who Drake appeared and wanted to be, but "**Take Care**" (2011) is seen as an opening up of Aubrey's innermost thoughts and emotions, stemming from his childhood in Toronto up until now and explaining not who he seems to be, but who Drake truly is and has been.

From *Look What You've Done*, an open and honest song to Drake's family, particularly his mom and uncle, to *Doing It Wrong* where Aubrey recognizes that he is a heartbreaker up to *Cameras/Good One's Go Interlude* when he explains that sometimes he appears as something... but only on camera. He skillfully puts together an album where he twists in all aspects of his life to prove himself again to the world- and particularly his fans. As a fellow Drake supporter, Jasmin Sharpless states simply, "I would rate the album an 11 out of 10."

Drake has put together this album *and* given it a proper name. "**Take Care**" has become not just a name, but a statement to his fans, family, lovers, and even sarcastically to his haters that shows he won't let them bring him down and that he loves the support of those who care and wishes them the best. As you can see, this new album has obviously proven itself as an exquisite piece of musical art created by Drake- a true rap genius in anybody's standards.

StringTastic by Brian Leonardo

The Fantastic concert

On December eighth the Strings concert was held at 7:00 p.m. in the Githens Middle School gym. The concert was conducted by Mathew Stutzman, strings teacher. This concert was the first out of a series of concerts to showcase students' performance and abilities.

The concert was a great success and many of the students left with relief and satisfaction. The beginners had their first taste of a public performance. The advanced students got to show the new things they had learned.

The songs played were fun and exciting. The beginners played a series of songs like **Can-Can** and **Ode to Joy**. These songs were out of the **Essential Elements** books. The advanced players played a whole arrangement of Christmas songs, and some recognizable songs like **In the Hall of the Mountain King**, and **The Carol of the Bells**.

The Strings program is very proud of all the work they have accomplished. They would like to thank everyone for coming. "The advanced performance was very professional and sounded like they worked hard to learn the music they played," said eighth grader Emma Voorhees. Strings would like to thank everyone again for the plenty of support. The students and faculty look forward to seeing everyone again for the Spring Concert!



Did *Breaking Dawn Part 1* suck or was it actually Pretty Good?

by Chandler Richards

On November eighteenth twi-hards everywhere were lining up at theatres to see the movie that has people asking one question: are you team Edward or team Jacob? So here is my review.

Breaking Dawn: Part 1 had a lot of twists and turns that I loved. There were some parts that were a little slow, but only for a brief moment before they threw something at you. I thought all of the actors played their parts extremely well. (Especially Taylor Lautner) The CGI (computer generated images) were absolutely phenomenal. It looks so real!

My favorite part was the scene after the credits where it shows The Voltouri. They open up with Heidi walking in her stiletto heels, as shown in the previews. The way she walks adds to the suspenseful effect on the scene.

What was exciting about this, even after I read the books, was that they kept you guessing on which parts they were going to put in and which parts they were going to leave out. With people who have not seen it, they were always left guessing on what was going to happen next in the movie. It was fun to watch the people around me act on what happened.

All in all, I rate it five out of five stars. It was one of those movies that you know took a lot of time so they could pay attention to details. Bill Condon, the director, did a great job.

Harry Potter vs. Twilight

by: Emma Voorhees

Pick a side!

The argument of *Harry Potter* vs. *Twilight* has been going on for awhile now and I think it's time to settle it. Personally I'm a *Harry Potter* fan, but I've interviewed fans from both sides and hopefully we'll have a winner. Let the blood bath begin!

Sparkly Vampires...

Let's start with the Twi-hards, since they might stake me if I don't. Here is the opinion of 8th grader, Chandler Richards: "I think *Twilight* is better than *Harry Potter* because teens can relate to it more, and *Harry Potter* is more thrills and chills with a bunch of giant fights, its just not that realistic." Another *Twilight* fan I interviewed was 7th grader, Julia Good. She states, "I've seen all the movies and I didn't see a lot of the *Harry Potter* movies. Me and my mom just liked the *Twilight* movies better." And lastly, 7th grader Kaylyn Posadasta stated, "I think *Twilight* is better than *Harry Potter* because I like Taylor Lautner and *Harry Potter* has too many goblins and monsters." My opinion: Just because a guy will walk around shirtless half the time doesn't mean it's better than something else.

Awesome Wizards!

Now onto the *Harry Potter* fans! Eighth grade student Anna Meinecke is very adamant that *Harry Potter* will forever beat *Twilight*. Seventh grader Trevor Vook states, "*Harry Potter* is more realistic. *Twilight* is weird because it has giant werewolves and vampires killing people. *Harry Potter* is more for kids and *Twilight* didn't really have a back story." This is 8th grader Andrew Bowling's opinion on our topic, "I just think *Harry Potter* has a better storyline than *Twilight* and is more interesting. *Harry Potter* can be for both genders and *Twilight* tends to be more for girls." And last but not least, 7th grader Amber Ashman states, "*Harry Potter* is just better than *Twilight*, it's vicious and cool. *Twilight* is just all romance."

Winner?

From everything you've read here who do you think is the winner? Go ahead and battle it out. And thanks to everyone who gave me their opinions!



BandTastic

by Anna Meinecke

Well, it looks like the band concert is rolling into Githens Middle School again. This concert is an annual tradition of showcasing the many talents that all band students have. But this isn't your regular concert of the same boring songs. New teacher Patrick Blackburn has been changing band. Mr. Blackburn has sorted out three sixth grade bands into two, one seventh grade band into two, and got instruments for the beginning eighth grade band that didn't have any because it was "General Music".

Now that everything has been sorted out he can focus on getting the band some publicity, and some well-needed and deserved funding. The band has gone to Jordan High School to train for marching band later to come in their careers, and now they're going to the Duke vs. UNC basketball game to play the Star Spangled Banner. "They're absolutely prepared for anything that comes at them," states Blackburn.

Tickets are on sale half price, for \$8.00, and can be purchased from Mr. Blackburn. If you don't want to get them from him, you have to pay the full price of \$16.00. With all of this going on Mr. Blackburn managed to get all the students music for the concert. "The band is doing] good," states Blackburn. The band is accepting any recruits, no matter what musical talent and whatnot you have or don't have. Band can really improve your skills in the musical world. Come down to the gym on December 19th if you want to see what the band works so hard for.

Delightful Food in Niagara Falls

by Donovan Polk

Just this summer in July my family and I visited Niagara Falls, on the United States side, for my birthday. There we visited three great restaurants, TGI Fridays, Top of the Falls, and Thunder Falls.

An Unfortunate Beginning

At first we had TGI Fridays at the hotel we stayed at. Unfortunately the food was not as good as I'd suspected. The meal I had was a simple steak, fries, and seasonal vegetables. The steak was not as "well-done" as I'd ordered it, the fries and vegetables were also not very tasty. Not the best food, but at least I wasn't hungry.

A Major Upgrade

The next restaurant was a HUGE improvement! We spent two dinners at the Top of the Falls restaurant. The food was delicious and fresh, the waiters and staff were attentive and polite. The burger that I ordered (both times) was perfectly made: the burger very well-done, the condiments fresh and tasty, the bread toasted to perfection. This was definitely a huge improvement in my eyes.

Top of the Food Chain

"It was nice, the food was really good," my brother said about the last restaurant, and best in my opinion, Thunder Falls. Thunder Falls is actually in the Seneca Casino, right across the street from our hotel. The best feature of the restaurant was the literally just-cooked-fresh-by-professional-chefs food, buffet style eating. The food was extremely well tasting, the most delightful meal of them all.





Simpsons Comics: Meltdown

They're Back and Better Than Ever!

By: Kennedy Wilkins

There's a new Simpsons comics in town: *Meltdown*, written by Matt Groening and Newman Serban, published by Harper. You won't want to miss this, you could've gotten this at the Scholastic Book Fair held recently here at Githens, for a steep \$15.99.

As always, The Simpsons deliver and kick it! There are funny new short stories such as *300's Company*, *The Burger Kings Of Comedy*, *Hotfoot In The Park*, *24/7th Heaven*, and *Coach Me If You Can*. You will see all the old Homer Simpson behaviors (some predictably stupid things) in *The Burger Kings Of Comedy*, such as trying to bribe a health inspector with "lettuce" (money in a burger box) so he can ruin Krusty.

Another story, *300's Company*, has the entire town of Springfield in Mr. Burns's mansion. In the end there is an *American Idol* knock-off, in which the contestants are chased off the stage by a pack of hounds because Mr. Burns thinks it's funny. I don't blame Mr. Burns, he's just... well... Mr. Burns!

I have found somebody else who has read it. Neal Wilkins says, "It's bursting at the seams with comedy!" So go get it, it's a must have for Simpsons fans!



A Special Thanks to the Raider Report's Section Editors:

Sports: Maliik Marcin

School News:

Bevin Copeland & Faith Jones

Arts & Entertainment:

Brian Leonardo

Editorial: Rachel Sauls

*All of the reporters for this edition were in Ms. LaMantia's Core 1 Language Arts Class.



Sports

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SPORTS

Jan. 2012

Point of View From A Coach by Gen Whitcomb

Many Githens students participate in sports. Whether it's a fall, winter, or spring sport every team has a coach. Normally after a game you hear all the details about it from your classmates or the players. In this article the coaches are highlighted, and they talk about practice, the sport, rules and referees.

What Coaches Think

Mr. Kelly, a 7th grade social studies teacher, is also the girl's basketball coach. After a quick interview with him he states, "The most important qualities you need for a successful practice are a good attitude, acceptable academics and correct knowledge of the game." Next Coach Kelly talks about referees, "Referees have a hard job, and it's really hard to see everything because everyone is looking from a different angle. Of course some coaches will argue with what they think is a bad call, but that's all part of the job for a ref. "

Deputy Costa, also known as Coach Costa to the Githens cross country team, speaks next. "Energy is really important for practice, also the mind set to work harder and get better." Lately the hard working team has been doing mile splits, hill running, and speed work to increase their endurance and times. When asked about if his job in law enforcement relates to his coaching position he replied, "When a player on the team violates a rule or law I do enforce the consequence more."

Mr. Begalle, coach, math teacher, and first year Athletic Director at Githens Middle School has been a sports supporter during his three years at this school. "As the Athletic Director I can watch the games from all directions and see what the coaches or crowd may not see. When I was a kid all I did was argue with the refs but now I have to think they are *always* right. I have some more respect for other sports because I can take the time to watch so many. I was probably the most involved with football because there were so many kids, but I try to get involved with all of them."

As exciting as it is to hear about the game from Githens students, it's also important to hear about them from the coaches point of view.



In This Section

- Chris Paul for the Lakers?
- Githens Athletics
- Wins and Loses
- NFL Prediction
- Githens Wrestling



Chris Paul for the Lakers?

by Duriel Covington

Most people can't picture Chris Paul in a Lakers uniform, but that very well might happen. With the Lakers financial improvements they can make it possible. The famous number 3 (Chris Paul) may just very well be on the back of a Lakers jersey. Adding Chris Paul to The Lakers roster and starting team would make The Lakers even more threatening than they already are. Even Kobe Bryant seems to be looking forward to being on the same team as the point guard, Chris Paul.

Some people say that "stacking the teams" can hurt the NBA by the fans loosing hope in their team to win. This can mean less tickets sold for games (making less money). Others believe that it's not really "stacking the teams," but just making the NBA

more exciting and interesting, which could mean even more tickets sold (more money). Making more money can also help the future avoidance of lockouts.

During the trading process, the agreement was made for Chris Paul's trade to the Lakers. Around 45 minutes after the trade deal was made, the NBA commissioner David Stern vetoed the trade to "maintain" his power and show the NBA players who is boss. Chris Paul's reaction to the veto was that he was thinking about suing the NBA for not giving him the capability to join The Lakers.

All of this is also affecting some of The Lakers players as well. Lamar Odom was angry at The Lakers for almost trading him and he still had to

attend practice. Due to this fact Lamar Odom was now traded to the Dallas Mavericks. Kobe's response, according to the SB Nation, was "I don't like it, I've known Lamar for a long time, he's great at bringing guys together and things of that nature. I trust management knows what they're doing."



“I trust management knows what they're doing.”
-Kobe Bryant



WINS & LOSES: A Look At Githens Middle School

by Charles Wooten

Blowouts: Wrestling

On December 8th the Githens Raiders hosted DSA for an evening match looking to stay undefeated. They did just that with a Major Blowout 75-18. These guys are looking to do what they did last year and win the Red oak Championship 3 times in row!!

Blowouts: Girls-Basketball

On December 8th the girls looking to avoid two losses in a row make the DSA girls look like an easy win by 25 points.

Boys Basketball	Girls Basketball	Wrestling
0-2	1-1	2-0

Githens Athletics

by Andrew Bowling

Githens Middle School has been winning championships since 1988 with the boy's soccer team. The athletes have been successful thanks to hard work in and outside of the classroom.

Why Githens Athletics Are So Great

Githens Athletics are among the best of the best in Durham middle school history. This can be proven truthful with one glance at our trophy case. Athlete Duriel Covington stated, "Athletics at Githens are great for improving skills." Yes, that's right you don't have to be born an amazing athlete to play at Githens. Our coaches will teach you the skills necessary to play your sport.

Recent Champions? Of Course!

The girl's tennis team won championships in 2009, 2010, and tied DSA this year as conference champions. The boys' soccer team has been conference champions three years running with only one loss in all three of the seasons combined! Even though we didn't win in every sport we still had some strong finishes, for example, the Football team was 5-2.

Future Athletics

I am sure I speak for all the Athletes here at Githens when I say that we will keep the tradition alive. We will never stop raking in the titles. **Go Raiders!**

"Athletics at Githens are great for improving skills."

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GITHENS WRESTLING by Kelton Fox

Githens wrestlers, coached by ex-coach (Coach Douglas) and Coach Campbell are getting better and better everyday, and are one of the best teams in the district. We will remain the best and win the championship once again.

The Will To Win

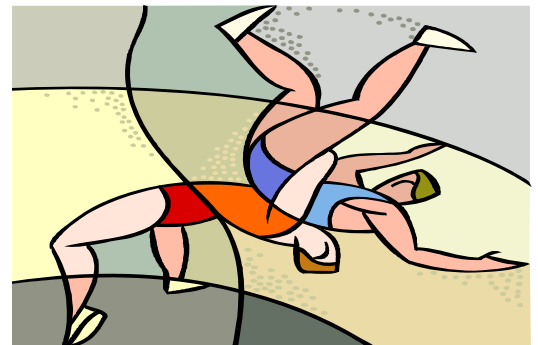
Githens has been winning the wrestling championship back to back for the past couple of years. This was made possible by are determination, teamwork, and training from our coach.

Our Progress

Githens wrestling is coached by a newer and fairly younger coach who goes by the name, Coach Campbell. He has already taught us new things which came in handy in our first two matches. Githens has already won their first two matches against Carrington and DSA. Our next match will be against Chewning, which is going to be a home game on December 13th.

Our Players

Each one of our wrestlers are improving and becoming more talented everyday. They are becoming known throughout the school. I have asked one of our wrestlers how practice is and he said, "Practice is hard but worth it." We as wrestlers look at each other as brothers and are always there to motivate each other to try our hardest. We are Githens Wrestling.



NFL Prediction and Play-Off Picture by Maliik Marcin

Many people are starting to switch over and get in gear for basketball season, but football season is nowhere near its end. We still have to think about our play-off picture, and fan favorites for the Super Bowl which takes place on Feb. 25th, 2012.

Football fans everywhere already know the Packers have made the play-offs because of their undefeated record. The thing is, what about the other seven that have to secure their spots? Not to mention there are two wildcards (2 teams that have the 2nd best record in their division) that have to secure their spot.

Play-Off Birth

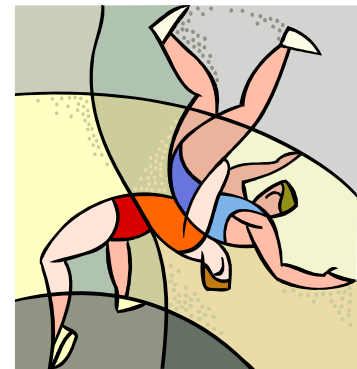
As it stands right now, there are actually four teams that have clinched their division and made it to the play-offs. Those teams are the Packers, Patriots, Steelers, and 49ers (Who haven't made it to the play-offs since 2002). The two wildcard teams for the AFC right now will be the Ravens and Bengals, and coming up right behind them are the Titans, Jets, and Raiders. For the NFC, the two teams most likely to be the wildcards are the Bears and Falcons. Coming up behind them we have the Lions, Giants, and Seahawks.

As teams still battle it out

for their play-off births, the coaches still have hope.

Head coach of the Jets, Rex Ryan said in an interview, "Our play-offs start right now. Are we going to change a few things? Yes. I think we need to. I think we really need to study some things." If that doesn't show determination I don't know what does.

Be on the lookout, and watch out for those teams fighting to get a play-off spot. You never know what can happen with some hard work and determination.



**Thank you to the
Redwoods Group in
Morisville, NC for
making the Githens
Middle School
newspaper:
THE RAIDER REPORT
possible for publication!**

Interested in Writing an Article?

Please see Ms. LaMantia
in room A4 on the
8th grade hall for more
information on
how to become a
staff writer, editor,
or photographer!



8TH GRADE FORMAL

by Audriana Lee

When and where is this happening?

Eighth graders from all teams will be able to attend the eighth grade formal at Githens in the Fine Arts hall on May 11th from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. so that these students can say their final good-byes.

What am I suppose to wear?

Ms. Lynne Brady, eighth grade math teacher, is organizing this formal and has already reserved a DJ. "I am very excited about this year's formal," she said. "I'm ready to have a great night of fun and dancing." Students are advised to wear semi-formal clothing (nice dresses or skirts for girls, and nice shirts and dress pants for boys). You will also still need to follow the dress code set forth in the Code of Conduct. If any students have trouble getting clothes, teachers are here to help find clothes for you.

We all can't wait!

When asked if they thought the students were excited about this year's formal, Ms. Brady answered, "Not yet, but as the day gets closer I think they will be." She also adds that she's been hearing more and more students talking about it everyday.

"Dress to impress!" says Eshe Brooks of the Ravens team. "I'm very excited and can't wait for the formal," said Joan Mae Dela Cruz also from the Ravens team. All eighth graders have been waiting for this year to come.